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heartattack

50¢ #40

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#3, #4, #11, & #16-#22 the usual shit
#33 Unholy Grave interview
#34 Tear It Up and Against Me!
#35 Pushead/Submission Hold
#36 Rambo interview
#37 Yaga interview
#38 Education theme issue

All other issues sold out.

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January 1st • April 1st
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CONTRIBUTIONS: We need articles, interviews, letters, and just about anything you can think of. Most of the things in HaC were just sent in by random people. You can do the same. We print what we like. Throw in some stamps if you want your shit back.

COMPUTER INFO: **HeartattaCk** is fully computerized... so if you can, please send all contributions on disk. You can use IBM or Macintosh disks, but please save all files as text only files!!! You can also submit via e-mail, but again please save all files as text only. If you don't have access to a computer or typewriter then use a pencil or pen.

Issue #40

November, 2003



Brett, Lisa, and Brett's extended family



Kent and Leslie



Walker and Fil



On Saturday, November 1st 2003 our own Lisa Oglesby and Brett Hall were married after being together for ten years. Cover photo by Fil (from left to right Kent, Lisa, Brett, and Leslie). Photos on this page by Josh Peach.

heartattack

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LETTERS TO HAC

HaC,

I hope *HeartattaCk* continues to carry Al Burian's column. It does not seem to be in #38. Burian was the reason why I started to read *HeartattaCk*. Now I read everything, but I read Al Burian's column first. To me, *HeartattaCk* is very important, valid publication. Very informative and insightful: politically and otherwise. I'll keep reading it if Burian's column does not continue, but that would be a major disappointment.

Thanks, Hanson Dates/31 Jim Goodson Rd./Griffin, GA 30223

Dear HaC,

I just came home from a show. Two bands from Austria played, plus local support. Watching the first band play, and listening to their singer talk between songs, it struck me as something really familiar... and I knew what it was at once—it pretty much looks like what you think of when someone says "European political hardcore band." A year earlier, one Swedish band played here, they were pretty much in the same vein, just a bit more melodic and less double-bass action and fast parts. But it's not just the music and the stage moves that got me thinking, it would be petty crying about that. And I'm not trying to badmouth either of the aforementioned bands—they surely try hard, they all toured Eastern Europe which is quite a feat (I know how the things work here with organizing shows and it can be really demoralizing: the standard is low, the language barrier, drunk assholes...) and I must congratulate the guys for dealing with the drunk idiot who tried to fuck with them. Still, there's one thing that I noticed in so-called "activist/political hardcore" circles. The talk between songs is pretty much the same, and it all comes from one source: Crimethinc. Now, I read *Evasion*, I read *Inside Front*, *Harbinger*, *Days Of War*, *Nights Of Love* and it is okay—there were parts that made me yawn and there were ones that got me thinking and wishing I was out there doing the same stuff. But, to be honest, (pardon my generalizing) from Eastern European perspective it's all so superficial, idealistic, and sometimes impossible to the point of silliness. I'm sure there's people out there who live their dreams, but Crimethinc easily became the new *Bible* in the "activist" circles. So much that I heard people saying how they're "into Catharsis politics," I mean what the fuck??? What IS "Catharsis politics?" They were the first to try to get you to think for yourself and use your head, but people started hanging on their every word and mindlessly regurgitating the same talk of "no-gods-no-masters-everything-for-free-destroy-the-fucking-capitalist-system" that I ask myself do they think about what they're saying at least a bit? No offense, but when a band from Western Europe comes here and says how it's a shame that you have to pay for a drink in a café, to pay for using computers in internet-café, to pay this and that, I have to laugh to myself. For fuck's sake—

of course it sucks, but hey, we ALL know that, and why don't we start talking about things that really matter, down-to-earth stuff that can be done to improve our lives a little bit. I mean, I know for sure that you have to pay for those services in the West, too. Nothing is for free, and hey, let's not kid ourselves—it will probably always be like that. I'm not the one to advocate apathy and resignation, but I've heard that kind of speech and read it countless times before, that it lost almost all of it's sincerity. It makes me think is that the only thing activist punks can talk about? Is Mumia Abu-Jamal the only political prisoner (as one letter in your International Issue so nicely put it)? Is McDonalds/Starbucks/Shell/whatever the only legitimate target? I wish people would start looking at themselves. "Catharsis politics," instant-rebellion, that's what it boils down to, I'm afraid. It's a new hype—eat bagels, drink lots of refilled coffee, steal CDs and books, dumpster-dive, hop trains... that's all fine by me, but how come that everyone has the same story, that everyone has same ideas; a carbon copy of what Crimethinc Collective tries to do. What about creativity and individuality? Really, what about that? I doubt the collapse of capitalist system will come about if all the bands are "into Catharsis politics." I doubt that much is being done except patting one another on the back and thinking that we're some big shot revolutionaries. (Of course, there are people that get things done, and I'm not talking about them. I think they probably have bigger concerns than our little cliquey "scene.") I really wish for a day when I will come to a show, and not ALREADY know what the singer will say in between songs, what cliché slogans will be shouted, etc. I wish for some different views and opinions, for some individuality and originality. Catharsis came through Europe and went back, made an enormous impact, and while having the best of intentions, indirectly did the opposite of what they set out to do—or what at least I think they set out to do—instead of individuals, we have tons of bands that look alike, sound alike, and the worst of all—have the EXACT same topics/lyrics/ideas/talks between songs.

Okay, so I talked shit and talked some more. Once again, I don't have anything personally against anyone and I'm sorry I had to make an example of that Austrian band. On one hand, I am glad that I live in Eastern Europe and don't have the chance to see that much bands, I guess I'd be much more jaded and pissed about the current state in political hardcore these days, cause I'd be seeing much more bands that, even if on the surface it doesn't look that way, really have NOTHING new to say, if they have to say ANYTHING at all.

Of course, I'm not perfect, so feel free to call me on my shit. I will answer all mail accordingly. Communication is a start, I guess...

Srdjan Kuzmanovic/Jove Ilica 32/11000 Belgrade/Serbia;go_011@hotmail.com

P.S. If by any chance you want to hear my band (Unison) or some other local band, feel free to contact me about that. Since I'm human too, at the end of my banter I shamelessly plug

my own band. We have a new split 7" with Senata Fox (Croatia) out, and a CD, too, so we have to sell the fuckers...

HaC,

This is a notice to inform the reader or the concerned for those incarcerated in this California prison I'm in.

On June 23rd 2003, a couple of guards were attacked. It was on the local news in the Central Valley. What they didn't say was who did the attacking. Well, it was a black prisoner. They placed us on a state of emergency; that consists of every prisoner in this prison to be locked in his cell until the investigation is completed. If any of you have ever read or worked in CDC, you should know that the system is biased, discriminatory, and corrupt. Whatever they say goes and if you rebel against it they attack with vengeance. They want to silence the lambs and reap the fat pay check, along with whatever else they steal. My effort is to speak out for black prisoners as well as all who are caught up with me.

Discrimination is the norm for most black men in and out of prison, but its closer in here. Example: When a race of men fight each other or guards, they go through Motions & Resume Program. Now that come black men have caused this lockdown they immediately allowed the non-blacks to work and assist the guards. So that goes to show the lack of revolutionary unity. We all suffer at the hands of the capital dogs but they don't get it. The number of freedom fighters have diminished into a larger number of snitches—who now have their own yard, the better jobs (with pay)—taking away from the men who deserve it. That is what the system wants. Prisons full of weak, spineless drones who do everything the guards tell them to. The prisoners who rebel and try to move about without restraints end up quiet and shut down. For they are whipped, beat up, and tired. The most memorable act that took place in prison was the attack on the guards in Soledad Prison by the Soledad Brothers. That act of rebellion should be a reminder to the modern day prisoner, but its not. It has gotten worse. So bad that no one wants to take action for the positive progress of the oppressed. For some reason, many inmates feel it is necessary to turn informant. They must give in to the demands, advice, and control of the capital dogs that feel all inmates should give up and fall under the spell of the system.

Back to the lockdown... It has put everyone at odds. Non-blacks assisting the guards and all blacks locked down. They have to implement new tactics, they have started sending our packages back to our loved ones. That is a first in my miserable years in prison. They want to send out a message: "If blacks keep up the violence, no one will get anything." They want to provoke violence between prisoners and inmates so we will become distracted and leave them to their safe existence.

Now, I don't condone violence for the sake of watching people get hurt. There are means of defense we as prisoners can use in order to gain a voice. The peaceful approach has been somewhat effective but there is a major repercussion that takes place when it is over. They hook us up with disciplinary write-ups that go in our files and are used against us once a year. They have a noose ready for anyone who goes against the set program.

No longer is prison an institution of rehabilitation. It is all about subjugation and propaganda. The system will get worse for us. In the history of the United States, the black men have gotten the worst treatment given to mankind—and in prison it's even worse. It's not paranoia, it's reality.

There is a caste system within the races. Blacks: crips, bloods, 415 (Bay Area), non-affiliates. Hispanics: southern, northern, pisas. Whites: AB's, skinheads, peckerwoods, woods, NLR, non-affiliates. Asians: consolidated. American Indians: consolidated. Within each race they socialize with one another. A discrepancy can break out within the race. But most of it is directed towards blacks out of fear, every non-black faction has animosity for a black man. Although we may not be liked and we may not like each other, as well as others, we have a respect for the human, not the man. With that respect there is no unity and if we do not come together it is under duress. I would love to see unity with all races. Come together in agreement to rise up against the system and set new rules, regulations, and program. If society is not willing to except a union, then we will never have a collective. I have socialized with different races all of my life. I embraced punk rock in '78, going to shows, representing the movement in the hood, and wherever I go. I'm known in here as the black/white man 'cause I listen to punk rock and they can't understand it. I'm not a gang member, nor have I ever been, but I can relate with them. My message is to find a way to better your situation with valuable resources. The focus is on drugs, money, gambling, and other frivolous crap that will not support the power of unity. I share my 'zines and other pieces of literature underground to the brothers to give them some insight on what is going on with those who are on the front lines of protest around the world.

I won't give up spreading the word to the hard heads who choose to be mislead, misguided, and misinformed. For those of you who support prisoners and parolees, keep up the good work. Don't give up on us, we need you all.

The injustices continue with keeping the prisoners way past a release date. Those who were sentenced under the old law, 5/7/15 To Life, are still doing time due to a corrupt prison system. Men and women sentence to Three Strikes, we are treated like we murdered people. How can we eradicate the injustices? If you have a solution or any feedback let me know. This is my first attempt at writing down my thoughts. It is a lot harder than I thought, but I hope I made some sort of sense.

Keep the faith and fight for freedom. If you care to respond, write to: Mr. L. Jackson/ D72552/B4-202/PO Box 1040/Soledad, CA 93960

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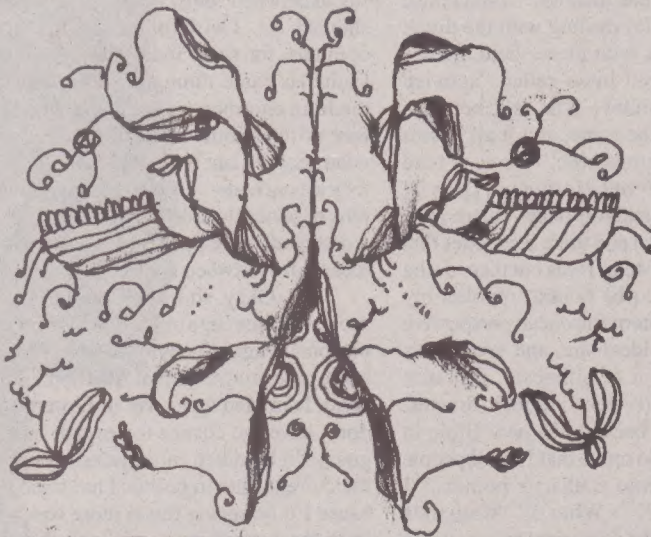
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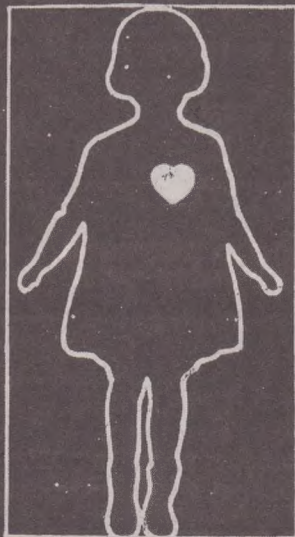
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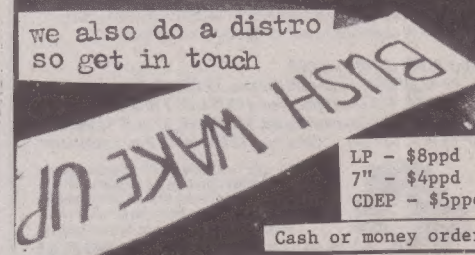
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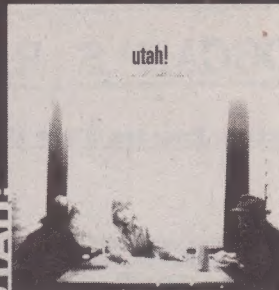
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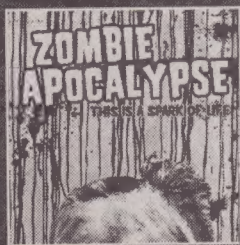


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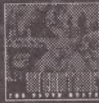
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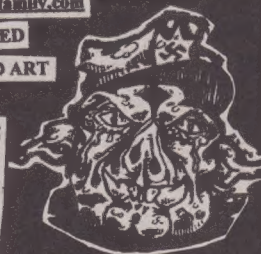
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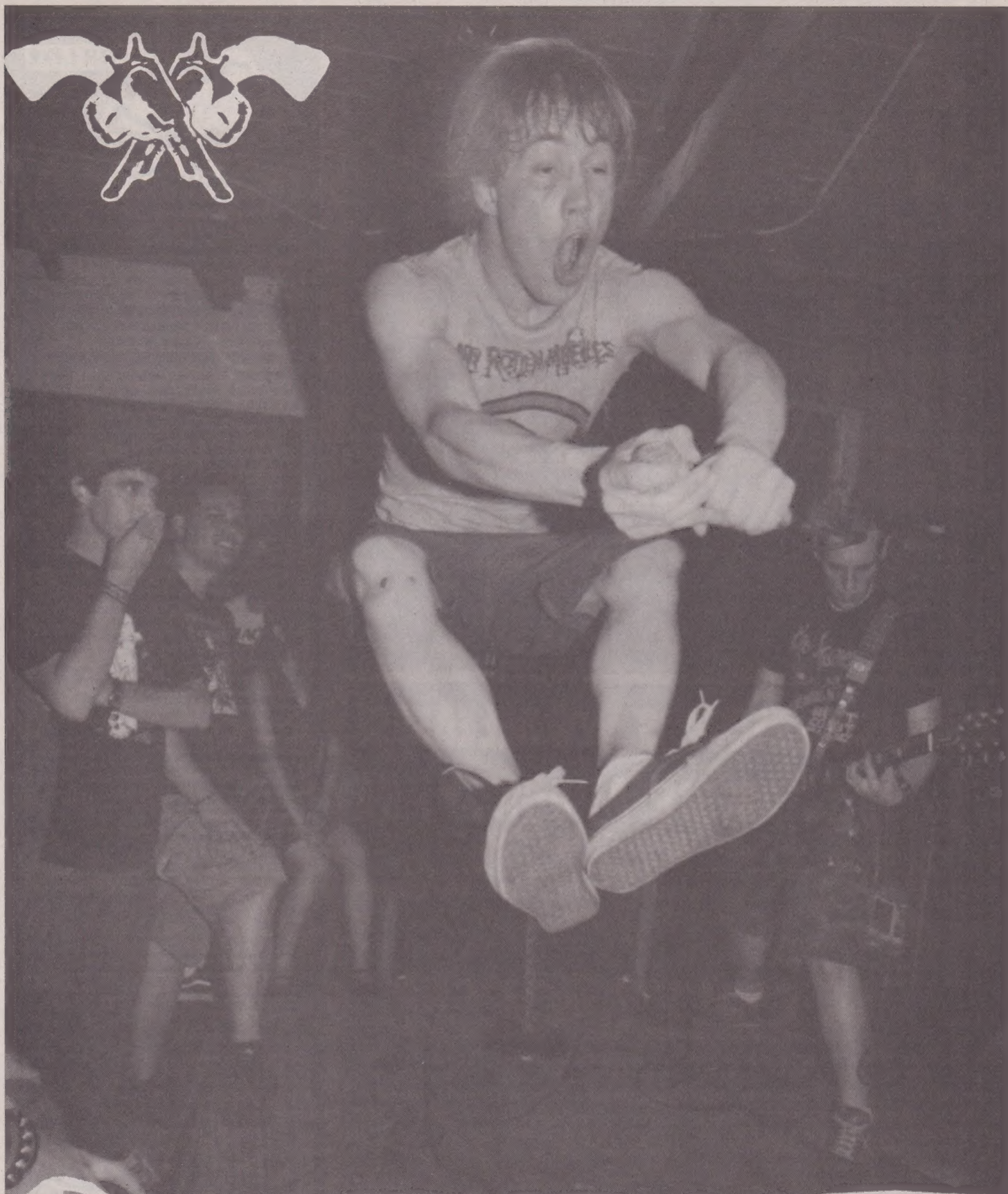
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OUT THE SHIT

photo by Matt Average

I was first introduced to Cut The Shit when their guitarist Paul handed me a sticker at ABC No Rio almost two years ago. I looked at it a little confused trying to figure out what the fuck this band was actually trying to say through their artwork. The art work and graphics are indeed odd enough, and have consistently made me giggle a bit I must admit. Eventually I received the bands demo in the mail and I was flat out floored. The band's non stop approach to playing fast intelligent hardcore punk is something that is a rarity in this sometimes stale and stagnant world of "lets do it the same over and over again." I hope this interview sheds some light on who these four guys are and what they are about.

—Interview by Mr. Nate Wilson

HaC: What are your names, what instrument do you play, and how old are you shitters?

Erick: I'm Erick, I play bass, and I am 21 years old.

Andrew: Andrew, I hurt myself, 21.

Tommy: Tommy Von, drums, 25 (yeah, I'm old).

Paul: Paul, guitar and I'm 22.

HaC: Okay for the many people who don't know you guys, and have never heard Cut The Shit before, how best would you describe you're sound?

Erick: I've seen lots of weird descriptions of what our "sound" is like. Once I read somewhere that we sound like SSD and that couldn't be more wrong. I think its because I wear that T-shirt all the time. Anyway, as far as what I think we sound like, I'd say we're a mix of early DC hardcore, some Black Flag, and some Discharge. More recent influences would include Deathtreat and Totalitär. Pretty much just your basic hardcore sound. At least that's what I hear.

Andrew: I'd say we're aggro as fuck! No, maybe that we're a pissed off punk band?

Tom: Fast, hardcore, punk, pissed off. I think that sums it up. Think Deep Wound being molested by Tear It Up.

HaC: Why the name Cut The Shit? What's the story about how you decided on that name?

Tom: We actually spent a long time trying to figure out a name.. One day one of us mentioned it while eating burritos and we all where like, yep that's it. I think its just funny and kinda fits with the theme of the band.

HaC: I actually thought it was like a bad drunk punk band when I first saw the sticker that you gave me, Paul.

Paul: It was me who suggested the name because I got a kick out of how confrontational it came across, and that has definitely been the way the name has been received! You would never believe how many people automatically assume every song you write is about them just because your name is Cut The Shit ...it's like we inadvertently called out every hardcore kid with a complex!

HaC: What inspires your artwork?

Paul: It's hard to say... I take a lot of inspiration from my friends. The people I interact with every day and the events in my life are what I work off of most.

HaC: We all know Paul is an Art student... Are you all students or do you work? Anything you really love to do outside of the band?

Erick: Right now I'm just doing the 9 to 5 thing at a lab, but I'm making plans of going back to school. Other than work and the band, I sit at home

a lot and play ample amounts of Nintendo. Sweet life.

Andrew: I'm a full time loser; but I go to school at U Mass for Political Science and I work at an ice cream shop part time. That's pretty much it. That and I skate and read.

Tom: I have a regular 9-5 job doing computer work.

HaC: How did you guys meet one another, at shows?

Paul: Andrew, Tom, and Erick have all know each other for a long time, but I didn't meet these guys until I moved to Boston from New Jersey back in January of 2002. I first met Tom through playing shows together with our respective past bands. Then he introduced me to Andrew, and Andrew introduced me to Erick... now we're a happy family!

Erick: I met Andrew junior year of high school. Funny thing is that for the longest time he thought I had something against him, but we finally bonded over failing to hand in papers for this really lame English class taught by this guy who dressed like a priest but wasn't one. I met Tom through Andrew and we all started to hang out. Tom and Paul knew each other already so when Paul moved up to Boston we all just started hanging out.

HaC: Does it ever bother you guys to see yourselves billed as ex-Tear It Up, or ex this or that?

Andrew: Stuff like that really got to me when we first started playing together. Both Paul and Tom had been extremely successful with their bands in the past and I really didn't want to have to kind of compete with those expectations. I thought we were a good band, but we weren't Tear It Up or Cops & Robbers; I really wanted to be judged for our own merits. What's in the past is in the past—I guess a lot of it stems from my own insecurity. But sometimes its kind of a necessary evil I suppose, and it can be useful if the band sounds similar to past endeavors.

Tom: I mean its annoying if overused. I think when a band gets started, its worthwhile so people can get an idea of what you are gonna sound like. Like if kids dug Tear it Up or Cops & Robbers I think they would dig this band. But at this point, at least in the Northeast, most people are familiar with us and that label isn't necessary, and it's pretty dumb.

HaC: Do you think its a way for labels to sell more records, and promoters to get kids to support bands, or do you think its a necessary part of the hype machine?

Paul: I look at the ex-members bit as a necessary evil in the HC scene. I can't say that I'm a huge fan of it, but if my favorite band broke up tomorrow, I would be interested in finding out what their next project will be. It is just unfortunate that it has elevated into it's own class system within the hardcore scene, where new bands are glorified on the past accomplishments of their ex-members instead of their own actual merits. I feel as though a lot of new "unheard of" bands are pushed to the wayside because of this, and a lot of people miss out on hearing good music.

HaC: How do you guys feel about the whole "thrash revival" thing that's been happening for the last couple of years? I myself have found the word thrash a word that I'm almost embarrassed

to use any more, as it seems a buzz word much like "powerviolence" or something.

Paul: Sadly I feel that is the case. For a while there, all a band had to do was say that they were thrash and they would instantly have a dedicated following. However, it seems now people are over the "thrash revival" thing and way more into the "mid '90s bad mosh revival" stuff, so in the end I don't think it matters ... The true believers will still be there to support you.

HaC: Do you guys all feel the same way?

Erick: Well, I was pretty psyched about it for a while because it sped things up a bit and brought back a lot of energy to music. It was pleasant change from the generic slow hardcore bands, which seemed to be everywhere a couple years back. When I now hear the word thrash I kind of cringe only because that genre of music was so quickly saturated with bands that would just play ridiculously fast, have some ass sounding vocals, and write some really uninteresting and uninspiring songs. The whole bandanas and mesh caps got old pretty quick.

Andrew: In one sense it's cool because I'd rather have a whole bunch of bands that play really fast instead of legions of mosh metal bands; but I don't think that word really even describes half the bands that call themselves "thrash." It's definitely gotten played out, but I think that's unfortunately how the hardcore scene works. A few individuals will work really hard to come up with something original and then a lot of people just bite that.

Tom: I think it's been great that many DIY hardcore bands that have gotten popular over the past few years, but it has lead to a stereotype. Some bands like Last In Line have been included in this "thrash" label, but in fact they are just a straight up hardcore band. I think thrash is a label that doesn't have the same meaning for everyone. As for me I've always loved fast hardcore, whatever its labeled..

HaC: What are some of the important elements that keep you guys living the DIY punk lifestyle?

Erick: I suppose the main important element for me is connecting with other people and sharing ideas. Basically getting to know other peoples views and opinions on just about anything. You can do that anywhere with anyone I guess, but it holds more pertinence to me talking to other punk rock kids about whatever.

Paul: I would have to say the number one element is my own constant dissatisfaction with my own life that keeps me pushing forward. Nothing is greater than picking up a new punk record and feeling like people all over the world are feeling the same things I feel, and using it constructively to produce awesome music! That really pushes me to work harder and write more songs.

Andrew: It's allowed me to learn how to do a lot of things that most kids aren't able to. For instance, I've wanted to see bands play, and I've been able to contact them, book a show for them, and actually hang out with kids whose music I really like. Erick and I are hoping to start a label, so right now we're both learning how to actually make a record, and I think all that is fucking incredible! If it weren't for punk rock I wouldn't be able to do any of that. As lame as it sounds, I really feel fortunate to be a part of this.

HaC: What do you think draws kids into hardcore these days?

Paul: Well, I'm not sure I could successfully put

my finger on any one thing, but I got into punk and hardcore through skateboarding when I was pretty young, and I feel as though that is still a pretty common way for kids to find out about it. As a kid, I started skateboarding when I was 6 or so, and that really made me the odd man out among my peers. Most kids at that age just wanted to play soccer. As I got older, I was able to find other kids who felt the same way I did about skating, and would share magazines and videos that had ties to the punk and hardcore world. It wasn't long until I was drawn to the hardcore scene with the same enthusiasm that had drawn me to skating.

HaC: I know when I was growing up it was because we as kids felt alienated by the rest of society, and we really felt as though we were misfits. What I'm wondering is, what sucks kids into it these days? Is it the same ol' shit? It seems very acceptable and safe to be a punk these days.

Erick: I know all throughout high school, work, and college I felt like the odd man out. Going to shows was a place where I felt like a part of something, even with obvious cliques within the scene. I still found like-minded people who felt the same way I did. I think punk/hardcore is more visible today than ever before, but I'm not sure if it's all that acceptable. I still get harassed on the streets and people still give me the hairy eyeball. I can't speak for other people's reasons for wanting to get into punk/hardcore, but for me I was just looking for a place to belong.

Andrew: Its funny because I definitely got into punk rock because I felt like I was an outsider in a lot of ways too. And for a lot of kids that still might be why the music speaks to them. Granted, it's not as rebellious as it might have been when you got involved with hardcore, but it's still not something most people can relate to. I definitely think that even more watered down hardcore bands that are getting airplay on MTV speak to a different—much smaller—crowd than say Mandy Moore. And if kids can use that as a stepping stone to get turned onto real underground hardcore bands than that's cool. And the kids who think it is just the hot new trend, well they can have all those larger "hardcore" bands, it doesn't bother me. Those bands—and their fans—really have nothing to do with my conception of hardcore.

Tom: That's what attracted me, being a misfit, hating everyone around me, etc. These days who knows. Punk is so popular and accessible (and fashionable) it could be for so many different reasons. I would hope kids would put on *Damaged* and listen to the lyrics and say, "Holy shit, this is my life."

HaC: Do you feel things have perhaps gotten too accessible? Is there such a thing? Is it killing the punk/DIY subculture or is it making it all stronger?

Paul: I wouldn't say it's killing it, if anything it's giving us something to laugh at along the way! I just think it's really absurd how marketable the "punk image" has become. I really never thought it would get this out of hand! But sure enough, there are kids at the really huge malls in the really expensive parts of NJ who walk around with bondage pants and mohawks, talking about how cool Sum 41 is!

Erick: I agree, I don't think accessibility can kill hardcore or punk. It just exposes more kids to the music. There will always be a strong core of

kids who know what the real deal is and there will always be the kids who don't really.

Andrew: Like I said before, if it exposes it to someone who legitimately gets something out of the music and the scene than that's cool. Regardless of whether or not hardcore is deemed "cool" by society at large, there are always going to be kids who try to use it as a way to gain some sort of recognition or fame, and in the long run it doesn't matter because they're the first ones to drop out anyway, so fuck 'em! There will always be kids into it for the right reasons.

Tom: Well in the short run, who knows. But I think in the long run it will make it stronger. I mean I learned of punk through Nirvana, I was a huge alterna-kid and read up on all things Nirvana. People then had the same argument about Nirvana. I think kids who "get it" will stay in the scene and find out about other bands.

HaC: Do you think that punks feel the need to believe they have the answers to everything we detest or encounter? I sometimes think the average hardcore listener might lose interest if the message isn't spelled out for them.

Tom: Some do, some don't.

HaC: Okay...

Paul: I really hope that's not the case! Punk is all about the power of expression. I would hope that the average listener reads lyrics and thinks for themselves. Not everything in life is handed to you, sometimes you just have to figure things out yourself!

Erick: I don't think anyone should feel like they have the answers to everything, because no one does and no one ever will have the answers.

Andrew: I think that's what is great about being a part of the hardcore scene; everyone else in the entire world is trying to push some sort of agenda or these universal answers, and it's all bullshit. With punk rock, the scene is so small—in contrast to the rest of society—and so eclectic that we're all coming from different perspectives and sometimes the only common ground we have is that we're all fucked up; and yet we are forced to acknowledge and deal with one another. In some ways I think that forces us to try to understand each other.

HaC: Seeing how the hardcore scene is now over 20 years old, do you think it's important for it to grow, or change?

Paul: It always has and it always will. That's what keeps it interesting for me! Today, the word "hardcore" embodies so many different sub-categories... with every new band something new is brought to the table.

HaC: What things would you like to see change?

Erick: I think there are some kinks to work out in the hardcore scene as far as issues with sexism, homophobia, and things of that nature. It's real strange to see a scene filled with social misfits and deviants be so exclusive at the same time. By no means am I looking for a utopian scene to be a part of, but some of those issues need to be dealt with.

Andrew: I think it's come a long way and the music will constantly evolve which is cool—hardcore should be about pushing boundaries. I'd most like to see a change in certain attitudes. Like Erick mentioned, I'm really turned off by things like homophobia and sexism/general macho stances. I'd be really excited to see more bands tackle issues like that.

HaC: The biggest generic question ever ... what are some of the bands that have influenced the band?

Erick: I just listen to a lot of Black Flag, Out Cold, Bad Brains, and all the early DC bands.

Paul: All the usual old school stuff. I really admire the guys in the Tragedy/From Ashes Rise family for their strong work ethic. They seem to really be on top of their game!

Andrew: I'm all over the board... I love old DC hardcore, a bunch of the old LA bands too, but then I'm really into any riot girrl stuff that everyone else in the band hates. Lately, I've been listening to tons of Ramones, Out Cold, later Black Flag, and Dinosaur Jr. Ha Ha.

Tom: Minor Threat, Out Cold, SSD, Jerry's Kids, Black Flag, GG Allin, TSOL, Slapshot, Nirvana, etc.

HaC: Do any of those bands stand out as the first band you can remember hearing and saying to yourself, "I wanna play in a band like this?"

Paul: 100% Minor Threat. I couldn't believe my ears the first time I heard "Filler!" That was it for me.

Andrew: Bad Brains. I was completely blown away when I first heard *Rock For Light*. I couldn't conceive of anyone singing/playing that fast. That was my first exposure to punk and as cliché as it sounds, it definitely changed my life.

Erick: I don't think it was just one band for me. Bands like Los Crudos, Slapshot, Brother Inferior, and SSD were the first punk or hardcore bands that I got into and I think they all made me want to play in a band. I got into those bands either all on the same day or within days of each other. The whole combination of being hit with political awareness, energy, and all around toughness really did me in. I haven't been able to shake off this punk rock addiction quite yet.

HaC: I know Andrew and Paul are involved with side projects (or other bands), how about Tom and Erick?

Erick: I only play in Cut The Shit.

Tom: I'm in The Prowl.

HaC: Does the fact that you are all in so many different bands cause problems or conflicts with Cut The Shit?

Tom: I only get a few weeks off a year so setting aside enough time for touring with both bands is the hardest part. I'm only doing one week of the CTS tour and The Prowl is going out in August for a week.

Andrew: We've been lucky so far. It helps that we're all kind of friends with the other members of the other bands, so we can kind of work things out so that everyone gets to play.

Erick: I'm problem free.

HaC: What's the story about your one sided 7"? That should have come out long ago?

Andrew: Initially it was intended to be a split 7" with The Prowl for our tour with them this past January. Unfortunately they weren't able to get it together in time, so we got an offer from this kid Josh in Seattle to do a one sided 7" on his label Autofacts Records. Well, he strung us along for a while promising he had just sent it in to be mastered; then he had just sent it in to the pressing plant; then he had just sent out the test presses... bear in mind this was all over the course of six months. He swears to this day that we should be getting our test presses. I think it's important to name names in this case because apparently he

has fucked over other bands as well, and I would hate to see someone who is earnest get burned like we did. So we've decided to release it ourselves and tour this winter to support its release.

HaC: You mentioned The Prowl, I know you toured with them and had you're tires slashed in Richmond due to you're relationship with them. Did you ever find out who did it?

Erick: No we never did find out who exactly did it, but people down there with a really good idea of whom it may have been offered to find things out for us. Personally I wouldn't want to waste any time on finding out who it was because in the end it was just a small inconvenience. We didn't lose any time at all. I don't think I would want to know the individual or individuals who slashed the tire, because if I did, I would hurt them in a really terrible way and would probably end up in jail.

Tom: Some of the Richmond kids claim to know who it was.

HaC: Did you confront them?

Tom: We never have confronted or talked to the person.

HaC: Do you guys consider yourselves to be a political band at all?

Paul: I wouldn't really say that we are a political band, even though some of our lyrics touch upon current political topics. I really only write about the things I experience first hand, since that is

what I feel I can speak honestly about. I think it is important to stay on top of current events, and I think it's great when bands are able to knowledgeably express their opinions through the music they write, but that is not really what Cut The Shit is about.

Erick: Most of our songs are reactions to things that piss us off and that may include politics and/or government doings. I don't know if that would make us a legit political band or not, but we're all aware of what goes on in this country. I think its always a good idea to keep tabs on what goes on in the political world from the higher ups to your local government.

HaC: Are politics still an important part of this movement (as it sometimes feels as though the same messages seem to be shoved in our faces over and over again)?

Erick: I think the reason why the same political message is being said over and over to our faces is because the same shitty problems still exist. As long as there are corrupt people in power you'll always hear punk bands writing songs against them. Whether that does any good or not is a different story.

HaC: How is the scene in Boston these days?

Andrew: Right now in Boston there are some incredible bands, that really have no place to play—it sucks. The only consistent all ages venue is an Elks Lodge in Cambridge that allows Jimmy Flynn to book Monday night shows. So all the

bands have to compete to get added to shows if they want to play. It's great that the Elks Lodge is willing to have punk rock and hardcore shows there, but a lot of people are bound to get excluded if that's the only time and place you can have shows. To Jimmy's credit he does his best to book a good cross section of the punk/hardcore scene which is cool and really important considering the current situation in Boston.

HaC: Are there any regular places to have shows there?

Tom: There's more places recently, but it still isn't easy to find a show. There are a lot of hardcore bands in Boston and lots of other kinds of bands too. The scene is pretty strong, but pretty divided by sub-genres. But overall it has only gotten stronger.

HaC: Thanks for the interview guys, how can people contact you?

CTS: Thanks for the interview.

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photo by Matt Average

SOMETIMES ALL YOU CAN BE IS A GOOD BAD EXAMPLE: THE AVOW INTERVIEW

AVOW

Avow is a punk 'zine. Pretty heartfelt at times, not bad layout, some okay art in it and every once in a while the writing's not half bad. It's not the best 'zine around, but hell, it could be worse. And hey, check it out: In concordance with the release of The Best Of Intentions: The Avow Anthology (a 284-page collection in book form that includes selections from Avow #1-10 and the complete issues of #11-16), Dave Roche and Scott Bice sat down with Keith Rosson, the idiot savant behind the 'zine, laughing a little and cringing a lot as he floundered and sputtered his way through some questions. Here's what happened:

DAVE: So when did the first issue come out, how did it come about?

KEITH: It was started in Seattle, in the very dark winter of 1995. Alex Arnsdorf and I started it together and it was an attempt at merging two genres that we were really on fire about at the time, which were punk rock and, unfortunately, poetry. Together. Yeah. We tried our damndest but it didn't quite gel. The first one came out in March of '95.

D: Did you do a 'zine before that?

K: I did, I did a couple in high school with friends. *Chicken Pox Blooze* was one. (Laughter.) Yeah, I know, sweet name. That one included a free condom that we, like, stapled into the pages so we probably ruined them. I doubt they wound up being very safe, you know? I hope nobody ever used those things, but like a lot of things, it, uh, seemed like a good idea at the time. Then there was a 'zine that my friend Tres and I did called *Drive-Thru Lobotomy*. It was kind of a one or two issue thing with each one of those. I think we made it to issue three with *Drive-Thru*.

D: Were they poetry and punk too, or what?

K: No, it was just...really bad. A lot of bad collage stuff, top ten lists. Some kids in high school put out pretty good 'zines, but I wasn't one of them. They're really hard to look at now.

D: Well, how long was *Avow* mostly a poetry 'zine then?

K: It wasn't all poetry, it was a fair mix up to #7 or so and then I started to get pretty disenchanted with the "literary" scene, and then by #10 there

hasn't been a poem in there since. It wasn't something I was interested in anymore, but at the time, I was enamored. The literary community is pretty weird but it's got a lot of parallels to punk rock in a lot of ways. The in-fighting and the backstabbing and all that.

D: So how were the early issues met? I mean, a lot of review policies in punk 'zines are like "No poetry 'zines, no matter what."

K: Right, right. It was pretty hilarious. The poetry folks didn't give a fuck about this band or this record or this interview and even the kids on the fringe of punk music were like, "Yeah, it's an okay 'zine but there's six pages of poems in it so just forget about it." The early issues were not very well received, no.

D: Did you just keep going with it because you thought it was going to catch on?

K: Well at the time I was so impassioned with it all, and it's not like I was printing five thousand fucking issues or something. At the time, if I got a letter from someone, *anyone*, it was like, "God, I'm doing *something* right! Someone sent me two

bucks!"

D: How many issues did you do with Alex?

K: One. Just that first one. We ended up parting ways after that. Amicably, though. Still good friends. He moved to Westport, Washington, a little fishing town and I moved back to the town where I grew up for a while. But he's been a contributor in other issues and helped me work on various elements of the 'zine. But it's essentially something I've done by myself since that first one. I think I'm too much of a control freak to do it otherwise.

D: But you just did a contributors issue.

K: Yeah, but that was fun. That came together really well. Every piece of writing that people gave me I was really

proud of. Really proud to print. Like, Mike Delach and Mike Ott did their own layout for their own pieces, I didn't have to do that, and every person that contributed to that issue is just an amazing writer. I've done contributors issues before, but that was the first one where it was like, "We're getting it right here. These people are good, they're awesome."

D: Okay, I wanted to talk about how throughout a lot of the issues you mention growing up in a small town and how you seem to think punk there was more... what, genuine? Is that right?

K: Well, yeah, somewhat. What, do you think that's bullshit or something? What do you think about that?

D: No, I can see it. I mean, when you're from a small town and you don't have access to certain things and then when you come across them it totally changes your life.

K: Exactly. We didn't take much for granted there. We didn't get jaded until much later. (Laughter.) Punk, for me, was incredibly freeing. I mean, I'm sure when you're sixteen and living



in LA or something, it's probably a lot different than growing up in a fishing town of 8,000 people, a fishing town filled with hillbillies. For us, if there was a record out that was even marginally good, it still had the potential to become a major milestone in your life. We were dumb but we didn't take anything for granted. Every bad record or bad show was still awesome just because it was there.

D: And then you moved to Seattle from there?

K: Yeah.

D: Was it better then, because there was more access to things?

K: Well, I don't know, Dave. I spent most of the time broke or intoxicated. (Laughter.) That was a rough period of my life and I was only there a fairly short amount of time. Didn't go to a lot of shows. Went to art school, when I could...

D: When you were sober enough.

K: Yeah, when I wasn't too hungover. (Laughter.) God, this is going to be a great interview. Everyone's gonna be like, "Why is this drunk asshole getting interviewed in *HeartattaCk*?"

D: Yeah, how long have you been edge, Keith? But moving on, you talk a lot in the 'zine about consumerism and how you want to make something that isn't specifically a product but instead it's about creating a medium that's about exchanging ideas.

K: Yeah.

D: Well, how do you feel now that you have this book out? A 'zine is something you make yourself, your fingerprints all over it, but a book is totally different.

K: Yeah, it is. And it's especially hard because somebody else paid for it. I mean, if I had put it out, I could just hand it out whenever I wanted and just mourn the loss of the five or six bucks that each book actually cost me, but it's someone else's money and I don't see myself ever having the kind of money to be able to do that. But from a sheer economic standpoint, buying the book is going to wind up being a fuck of a lot cheaper than buying all sixteen issues separately.

D: Right, but when I get a 'zine, one that I really like, I'll write the person and let them know that. But with a book it just seems like there's more finality to it, it's more of a final product.

K: And I didn't even put my address in this book. And that was intentional, I move around so much. But the books will be around for a while and I'll be keeping in touch with Troy at Fork In The Road Press, the guy that put the book out. Hopefully any communication directed to me will find its way to me. I desperately want that. But going back to the consumerism question... I killed a fuck of a lot of trees with that book, a whole lot. But I have enough faith in a lot of the stuff that's in those issues and that book that it beats some fucking corporate ledger being printed up. I mean, it's a copout, and *Avow* certainly isn't the greatest 'zine in the world, but there's things in there that seem to strike chords in people. And it's an amazing opportunity, one that I never thought I'd be

offered. So screw it. I'll save regret for later.

D: No, I'm not saying you should regret it or anything. But one of the things I don't get, and you can totally see it in the book with all the issues gathered together, there's this progression where you talk a lot about getting more jaded but each issue you're getting more and more open in your writing, putting yourself out there every time.

K: Really?

D: Yeah, you talk about how your insecurity supposedly cripples you, but you're totally open about that.

K: Well, fuck, it's easy when you do a 'zine. I think that's why a majority of us do it. I mean, I wrote in the newest issue about how, collectively, the whole idea of hipsterism and elitism in hardcore is so fucking stupid. It's dumb. If you jump back ten or fifteen years, we were all pretty much the kids that were getting pushed down, you know, with milk squirting out of our noses. For the most part we were all *geeks*, you know? There's no room for cool kids here. We're all on the same footing here, so it's very easy to just hand a 'zine to someone and go enjoy the rest of the show. And if the person likes it, they'll write you a letter or you'll see them on the street or at the next show. That's the cathartic aspect of it. I'm more disenchanted with a lot of aspects of the punk scene but with that, there's a lot less to lose, a lot less to worry about, so fuck it.

D: That's something I've been thinking about, too. Like, it's not that we're old, but... you're, what, 28?

K: Twenty-seven.

D: I'm twenty-eight. And when I was young and just getting into punk there were all these guys that were like, "Dude, you missed Chaos UK. You missed out." (Laughter.) And now that there's more of us that are this age, it's becoming a question of how do we stay involved without, you know, clinging to our youth. Not that we're ancient, but how do we reconcile getting older

of being very young, and maybe take a few steps back for a while, maybe we end up regressing a little bit, for a little while. But that's okay. The great thing about aging is that you realize little things seem to matter less and less. Which is good, because I'm a really slow learner, I have to fail miserably over and over before I get something right, before I realize, "Oh, that doesn't work." And punk gives you room to do that. There's a lot of breathing room here, there's room for mistakes. But I'm not sure I really answered your question...

D: No, that's fine. The early issues of the 'zine make it seem like it used to be kind of scattered, but the most recent issues seem like you've honed in on something. Do you have a format now that you're happy with?

K: Yeah, I think so. Each issue is definitely going to be thematic from now on. A short story issue, a contributors issue, a letters issue, like that.

D: You have future issues that you're working on?

K: Yeah. It'll still be made up of shitty xeroxes, misprinted pages and lots of typos, but yeah, shit's cooking.

(Brief pause while Dave's roommates come home and Dave, Keith and Scott realize the interview thus far is really boring. Dave cracks his knuckles and decides he's going to start kicking it up a notch.)

D: So what's the worst trend in punk right now? You can name names if you want.

K: Um... like I said, the good old days really sucked but at least back then I didn't notice this creeping influx of hipsterism. Fashion can be really insidious at times but sometimes, a lot of times in hardcore, it's just so fucking blatant that it's ridiculous. White belts in general, and emaciation and bedhead specifically. How's that? And nine out of ten hardcore bands with keyboards fucking blow. So there.

D: And what stuff do you hate to see in 'zines that just drives you nuts? And what 'zines do you specifically see that in? (Laughter.)

K: I'd like to say really bad handwriting, but I've had really bad handwriting in mine. Fucked up margins. See, Dave, this is where the 'zine nerd in me comes out. Low quality halftones. Bad layout. Misprinted pages. But see, these are all things that have, one time or another, been in *Avow*, so I should probably just shut the fuck up. Oh, and stupid interviews really bother me.

D: Shit. Sorry. (Laughter.)

K: There's nothing worse than...

D: Some guy in brown pants and a yellow shirt asking you stupid questions...

K: Yeah, some fucking guy with a beard asking me questions,

man. No, the absolute worst is "What are your influences?" I can't remember the 'zine's name, it was some 'zine out of Florida, I think, that came out probably ten years ago, and this guy interviewed Henry Rollins, right? The two questions I really remember that he asked Rollins were: "Do you really think weightlifting is going



and not just doing the same things over and over again, not clinging to our own "golden age" of punk.

K: I was just talking to my friend Jeff about this, and in a lot of ways I don't think it's specifically a "punk" thing. I think a lot of people, when they get to be our age, kind of grasp at those last tendrils

to change the world?" and "You sing about napalm in your songs. Do you even know what napalm smells like?" (Laughter.) Now *that's* an interview. *That* kid had it going on.

D: Yeah, but you've never written about napalm. I'm not gonna ask you what napalm fucking smells like.

K: Right, but you can be like, "Why do you whine so much? If you don't like being hungover, don't drink so much. Shut the fuck up about it."

SCOTT: Or, "Why are you always bumming off your friends? Why don't you get a job?" That's a good one.

K: Right. See, these are questions that could potentially make me cry, and that makes for a good interview.

D: Okay, I'm getting it. Here's the next brilliant question. I'm gonna tear you a new one with this question.

K: Okay, shoot.

D: In the 'zine, and especially in the later issues, you write a lot about getting your ass kicked and various melancholy moments, these really shitty events where there's just the faintest glimmer of hope. But then I've seen your band, Pelvis Wesley, play and you're not some emo band by any means.

K: Right, we dress up like trees and birthday cakes and sing songs about graphic design...

S: ...and how people should be nice to their mothers and stuff.

D: Right, it's a really fun, really drunk band. And I've seen you when you're out, you're not really all that shoe-gazing. I mean, at all. So why don't you ever write about those kind of moments?

K: I think I do to some degree. There are some stories in the 'zine that are just ridiculous. Hilarious barfights and people riding wheelchairs down stairs and ceilings caving in and all that. But I write more about the melancholy stuff, as you say, because it's the good stuff we don't mind holding on to. At least I don't. It's just... a way of purging all that sickness or that sadness of fucked-up stuff or whatever is by writing about it and then I guess being egotistical enough to have the guts to print it. And hoping that it strikes a spark in somebody else. And I think there's enough stuff, enough base emotion in a lot of the writing that many of us can relate to it, whether it's a story about a towel fight or something stupid like that or falling down drunk in the street while a cop drives by. I think there's stuff in *Avow* that everyone can relate to to some degree. I don't mind holding on to the good stuff. It's the stuff that's kind of shameful or the regretful stuff I want to get out.

D: But isn't there something cathartic about keeping the good times in perspective too?

K: Yeah, you're right. I try and balance out the humorous stuff and the sad stuff. Sometimes I miss the mark, but at least the attempt is there.

D: But even the funny stuff... it's like, the bar fights, you know, it's still a bar fight. Somebody got their ass kicked and had to leave at two o'clock in the morning.

K: Well, I don't know then, Dave... I guess it's

just my nature to be a whiny little asshole. (Laughter.)

D: So do you ever see the "All-Positive" issue of *Avow* coming out?

K: The Posi-Issue, huh? Well...yeah, possibly. When things start picking up a bit. But... shit, it's just been the worst six months for me and most of my friends, you know? Problems with the band, relationships, losing the house we were in, deaths in the family, it's just not... super cool right now. (Laughter.) This year hasn't been super cool. But it's something to work towards. I'm not done with the 'zine just because the book's out. How about we shoot for *Avow* #21 being the all knock-knock joke issue, how's that?

D: I got one. Knock knock.

K: Who's there?

D: Judge.

K: "Hey, you with that cigarette. Break the habit or I'll break you." (Laughter.)

D: You say the 'zine isn't done because the book is out but do you feel like it's the first chapter of some sort?

K: Yeah, very much so and it's a relief. It's nice to be at peace with the earlier issues and have a lot of the newer, writing-heavy issues all together in a format that I'm really happy with.

D: And you're also a painter, you do drawings, all that. I wanted to talk about that. Did you find that your painting and your art was influenced by punk at all?

K: Yeah, I mean, I've been drawing forever but I was painting at the same time the first issue came out. Quit painting for a few years, focused on the 'zine and illustrations for bands and other people's books and stuff. Started painting again in '99 or so, it's been going pretty full steam since then. Have had some shows, got picked up at a gallery.

but drawing, it's like a dying medium now. And there used to be so many amazing artists. They all seem to be dropping out or dying off, like Marc Rude did. But there's some kids that are picking up the slack lately, like that Mike Bukowski guy. He's just blowing up right now, his stuff is everywhere now and he's amazing. To me, drawing is such an integral part of punk design and punk culture and I wanted to try and keep a bit of that momentum going, to document some of my own accomplishments and dismal failures, that's why I did that issue, presented it as a sort of archive of some of my stuff.

D: So your paintings and drawings are intertwined with punk culture, in a sense?

K: Yeah. And it's not even that sophisticated. Like, whoever does the stuff for Pg. 99, the art for them, I think it's someone in the band, but I don't know for sure. I rip that motherfucker off incessantly, because the artwork that person makes is absolutely stunning. People like that, people like Mike Bukowski, Nate Powell, Cristy Road, people that are still very active in that medium, I can say I'm influenced by them but what it *feels* like is that I'm ripping them off half the time. Maybe just by looking at my stuff you wouldn't be able to recognize that influence or sense of inspiration, but to me it's there. It's totally apparent. Because they're putting stuff out all the time that's so good and there's so few people doing it now that when you do see someone and they're *good*, it's inspiring, it's the best thing.

D: Okay. For a rock-solid closer, I'm going to choose some random questions that someone asked Cher, taken from this issue of *Bust* magazine that I have here. Questions totally at random and you have to answer truthfully. Are you ready?

K: Uh, okay. Shoot.

D: "Did you really get a rib removed?"

K: Goodness, Dave, you're really getting down to the heart of the matter here. This is really going good.

D: "Did you ever eat?"

K: Uh, this isn't...

D: As good an idea as you thought it would be? (Laughter.)

K: Yeah. Are we done now?

D: Yes, we are.

K: Okay. Thank you so much, Dave.

D: Thank you, Keith. This was a great interview. I'm sorry it was ruined by me being here. (Laughter.)

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AVOW

D: What about *Avow* #15, is that all just drawings?

K: Yeah, it's all archival stuff, selections of drawings from 1996 to now.

And I did that issue because art...

I can count off, probably on one hand, punks that are still getting their art on records and in 'zines. It's all graphic design now, computer stuff, which is okay, I'm into that aspect of it too,

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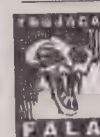
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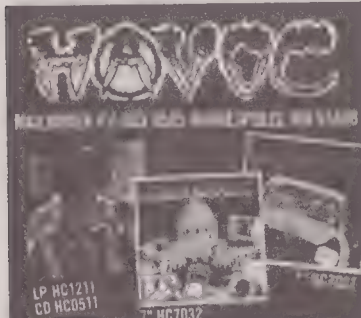
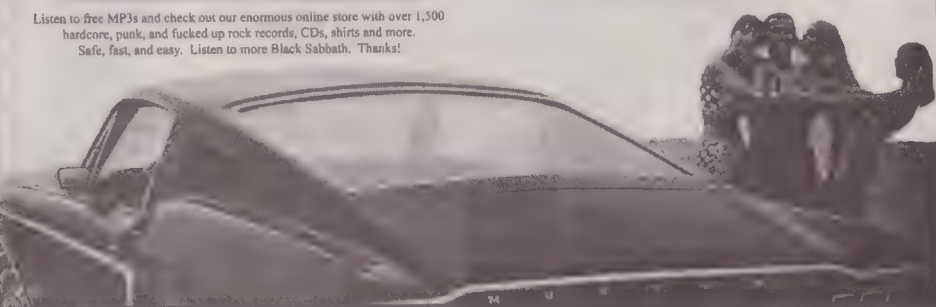
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RESIST SHIT DOWN

In these days where passion for hardcore is going out of style, basement shows and small, intimate venues run for and by punx are all we can hope for, sometimes we get lucky when heart core is revived instantly by a special band or a special night. Gunspiking, since their start in '97 have continuously kept people moving during and after shows. It is hard enough to motivate people to dance, but to motivate people to do more, outside the show space, calls for some mad props. As a band, they are on "vacation" right now, but we hold hope in our hearts that they will be back. Their 7" and CD are available from their contact address. Interview by Joy.

HaC: Well, let's start at the beginning, the name.

Jim: It came down to needing a name for a flyer and we gave them that name and it kinda stuck.

Doug: It means to spike a gun with a flower although since then I have learned that Gunspiking was actually some type of technical term having to do with firearms.

Jason: Which is awesome because if you type our name into a search engine you maybe get a mention about our band but definitely lots of mentions about guns.

Jim: But then you can get off the computer and live your life.

HaC: Gunspiking has existed for over half a decade. In punk terminology, that is old, has it been the same members since the beginning?

Jim: (the original bassist) There are at least nine members that played with us at one point that aren't playing with us now.

HaC: Why so many changes?

Jim: Because every guitar player we've ever had has been either a drunk, a flake or a sex offender.

Doug: (who now plays drums) Hey! I played guitar at one point.

[An uncomfortable stillness is created here. The interviewer looks to Kalie, the vocalist, for some sort of sign but receive not more than a roll of her eyes.]

Jason: (the guitarist, breaks the awkward silence) Oh, that was uncomfortable for everyone, why did you say that?

HaC: So what is in store for the future? Why no fifth member right now?

Jason: Sometimes we feel bad about having a guitar monkey.

Jim: Maybe we will just do the typical Philly thing and find a guitar player on the west coast and he'll fly in once a month for practice.

HaC: At one point, Jim, your brother played with yinz. How did the family relationship work in with the band relationship?

Jim: It was good. Sometimes we had trouble connecting about things but it meant a lot to me that he

wanted to play with us. Some of our best shows have been with him. For instance, we were excited about this relatively large show and at the last minute our present guitar player had an emergency and had to leave town without really telling us, which was

sort of unfortunate, but long-story-short, my brother, Kevin, stepped up and within a day learned our set and played the show and it was one of the best shows I've ever played. Travelling with him has helped us bridge gaps. I wish things had worked out where he could play permanently but he's got other really good things going on.

HaC: That's not the only mixture of love and music here. Kalie, how is it being in a band with the people you live with and have other relationships with?

Kalie: (simply states) It works.

Jim: (findings it not a sufficient answer) Well maybe we could explain that you and Doug are in a pretty serious relationship and have 2 kids and I used to live on the couch and now I live in the back room. I play bass.

Doug: It's hard sometimes. Having kids means we always need to have somebody to watch the kids if we want to do something with the band.

HaC: Do the kids around Pittsburgh lend help when yinz need it?

Jim: Since the first show, if it had not been for people in this town we never could have done what we have. People help us over and over. Both of our recordings were done for free. We get offers to babysit all the time. We have taken 5, 6, maybe 7 people on the road as babysitters. Our van brakes down all the time and people give us rides. I do not have any of my own equipment. This family in Pittsburgh has been super supportive.

HaC: Seven babysitters?

Kalie: One tour we had five babysitters.

Doug: Our first tour we had babysitters meet us in different cities. It's kind of weird with a babysitter because you feel bad. It's not like taking a roadie where they carry the shit but still get to hang out. The most guilty I ever felt was when we drove from Pittsburgh to DC, got out of the van, played, packed up, got back in the van and drove back to Pittsburgh. The babysitter, she spent like ten or eleven hours in the van.

HaC: How is touring when you have to worry about the kids and stuff?

Jim: Kalie set up our tour, 3 weeks, a few years ago and since then we just bug other bands to play with them. That's worked out pretty well. We did some dates with Resist and Exist and Face Down in Shit.

HaC: Speaking of which. I heard Face Down in Shit started in order to provide yinz with an opening band, making you responsible for their existence.

Jim: Indirectly responsible.

Jason: They're real good. They are definitely the only people that should take the credit.

Jim: I think it's the only constructive thing I've done in my life at this point.

Jason: That's not true. You went to college. (Many laughs)

HaC: Side note finished, let's get back to touring. You take the kids with you?

Kalie: Touring with kids is easier than touring with adults. You have more fun and meet more people.

[And another awkward silence occurs.]

Kalie: Reyghan, my five year old daughter, cried

less than whole band. I strongly advise touring with kids as opposed to leaving them at home. It's easy. It's fun.

HaC: It must create some remarkable experiences which most touring bands do not get to experience.

Kalie: This one time after a show in Binghamton, NY, we were cliff diving outside of town and Reyghan pooped outside. It was the first time she pooped outside so she made everybody go look at it.

HaC: (surprised) Cliff diving at a show, or after, on tour?

Jason: (adds modestly) We went cliff diving with a hardcore band and one REALLY grizzly guy. I'm trying not to name-drop.

Jim: (screams) And Chris Lawrence from Anti-Product!

Jason: AWESOME!

Jim: A-N-T-I-P-R-O-D-U-C-T. I think they are gonna have a record out on Ebullition Records pretty soon.

HaC: How do the kids play a role in your other daily activities, specifically, revolution?

Kalie: I used to take Reyghan to everything and then some asshole on the radio was talking shit on me and my child and my mom called me real upset. We argued for a while but I decided it was silly to put Reyghan in certain situations. I got more careful. I would never take her to something big like A16. I know people do, but it scares the shit out of me to be there myself. Mayday here in Pittsburgh was scary. We had to pass her around and I was yelling at cops with an infant strapped to my chest. I don't go to many things I would like to because revolution is not necessarily a child friendly activity.

Jim: I disagree.

Kalie: It should be.

Jim: I disagree. I don't have any kids but I live with kids and I work with kids. I think kid's are the revolution. I think raising kids is the most revolutionary thing you can do.

Kalie: That's only part of it though.

Jim: I agree that you shouldn't have children where there is teargas or rubber bullets.

Kalie: I feel stronger about being a parent and having to worry a little more about the future than I did before but I can do less on that level than I ever did before. There are some people that say that I am doing a whole lot more, just on a different level.

Jason: I was just about to say that.

Jim: People always talk about the "movement" having two tiers. There definitely needs to be major actions. Shut down the world bank, UE, FTAA and all that stuff and if it draws attention that is relatively affective but people always say that is not going to get us anywhere unless you start building community and I don't see how there's a better way of raising community than raising children.

Kalie: (quickly before racing upstairs in response to Genly's cry) It's a lonely job, though. But it's a lot more rewarding in a different way. Case in point. (she adds from upstairs)

HaC: Okay. So something I've been wanting to ask about is how your individual beliefs relate to the band's growth and such. Specifically, I want to discuss religion. I was both confused and impressed with the lyrics to "Methodology Of A Book Burning," from your newest album *Move*.

You speak of a revolution based on hate and the lyrics seem to be in reaction to something very specific.

Doug: Most punk bands write songs that look down upon religion in general. After I met Kalie, I had a newfound respect for other people's beliefs. Punk rock is supposed to be about open-mindedness and the thing about it is that when it comes to religion, people in the punk rock scene, for the most part, are not open-minded. They're very intolerant towards religion, all aspects of religions. Being a religious person doesn't make you bad. There are a lot of bad things to say about the institution of Christianity but that doesn't make all Christians bad people and when you really think about it, the mass of people who call themselves Christians are the farthest thing from the definition. The definition of a Christian is a person whom is Christ-like and if you know anything about Jesus Christ, I'd say the majority of people in the world that call themselves Christians, aren't. From what I've read, being a Christian isn't such a bad thing. The only thing that separates most of the anarchists I know from being true Christians is the fact that they don't believe in God, or that Jesus was the son of God. Other than that, it's all about being a good person and I think a lot of punk rockers, if they paid more attention to this, would find that they have a lot more allies in the movement. (Takes a breath and finishes.) GO PENGUINS!

Jason: One thing I was immediately psyched on when I read Doug's lyrics was the fact that it is important to allow people to have their own ideas, even if you do not agree with them. That is a lesson we can not learn too many times. Even if we think we are right, there are people who are gonna disagree with us who are not wrong just because they disagree with us. That is important to me.

Jim: I've had a pretty historically negative past relationship with God, being sort of raised Catholic. Parts of my life were spent in a Catholic institution and it sort of soured my taste for that stuff but I know a lot of amazing people who do have those beliefs and it sometimes makes me, I don't want to say jealous, but it's nice to believe in something and act out beautiful things, a lot coming from the faith you have. When Doug wrote the song, at first I didn't want to do it, but I think it's a good way to get across the idea. Like the lyrics say: "A revolution based on hate is no revolution at all." I don't now how we're gonna get anywhere by blowing people off.

Kalie: I have a hard time answering questions like that because I find myself on the defense. My spirituality is everything to me. It makes me strong and loving. It makes me who I am. I'm tired of giving detailed explanations of my heart to people who don't care. They want only to argue me out of it. I let these guys talk. Fuck the Penguins.

HaC: (half jokingly) It seems everything changed after September eleventh, has the band?

Doug: My personal views of the scene I've been a part of for the longest time have changed a great deal. I lost a lot of respect for it because of the way people instantly thought it was the greatest thing in the world.

Jim: I'm not sure I saw it that much. Maybe you saw it more than I did.

Doug: I heard stories about people celebrating. I

wasn't there, I just heard about it. Maybe they just weren't thinking. Maybe they were thinking about the idea that the towers were symbols of capitalism that were wrecked. It seemed like no thought was given to the fact that a lot of people's lives were lost and even though those people were working jobs for big corporations, they were still people. There were people who just had jobs because they needed to feed their kids. Those people for the most part where the ones who took the brunt of the attack and to celebrate it as a shot at capitalism is bullshit because it wasn't. It was symbolically, but the people who took the brunt or it were people, nothing more, nothing less.

Jason: I spent a lot of time in New York this past week. My sister lives 3 blocks away from the WTC wreckage. I thought it was interesting to see how many people still go down to visit the memorial. I have a weird encroaching sense of dread, this fear that these people are coming to it as a tourist attraction at this point. We claim to have learned all these things and consider American life more precious but we should have been considering it precious all along if that is what we really believe in.

Doug: It made me look at some of the lyrics I have written in a different light. I guess that's how it affected the band. Especially the lyrics in the song "Move." These people who have been taking our government's crap for so long and that's their answer. That makes me real sad. They obviously had to be pretty desperate to do something that extreme but it makes me sad that that is the people's answer.

Jim: Would it be fair to say then that it's our responsibility as members of a society which other people hate with enough passion to kill themselves and several thousand people, to work against that society. You can't advance an anti-capitalist movement by killing workers and as you said before the workers took the brunt. But we should do what we can to prevent American capitalism from being directly or indirectly responsible for something like this.

Doug: It just seems more hopeless to me than it did before.

HaC: (a bit worried) What does?

Doug: All of it. The majority of people in this country have reacted by putting flags on the antennae of their cars. That scares the shit out of me.

Jim: Wouldn't you say it's now time for us to be more active?

Doug: If you want to, do it!

Jim: Shit, I do what I want anyway.

Doug: No, it also made me think it might be just time to enjoy living. (He adds before asking Jason for a cigarette and pouring three final gin and tonics.)

Jason: In one sense it's encouraging that those people have reacted in a strong way because it shows that people in this country wanted to believe in something and right now, because they feel vulnerable, they are defending whatever they are encouraged to, which right now is their country. They feel a need to come together and it may only be a matter of time before they make the leap of rationalization that if they want to believe in something, well, I think there are definitely better things to believe in.

Contact Info: Gunspiking c/o Kalie/
3415 Juno St./Pittsburgh, PA 15213

HaC: You guys have been around now for over a dozen years. You have worked with so many (great) labels throughout those years. Is there any one label that stands out for you guys as a band? Do you prefer being on a major (ala Relapse or Necropolis) or on an indie (ala Deep Six or Slap A Ham)?

Shane: Yes, we have been around for some time now. We have worked with a lot of great labels and have gained some good recognition from each of them. I have always felt that status of a label and their main objective as well as their character depends on how the band will be perceived by an audience. This is because there are metal labels, hardcore labels, and grind core labels that have all different consumers and supporters. If you want to get your stuff out to different people you need to venture off into different areas. I really prefer to be on labels like Slap A Ham, Deep Six, OHEV Records, Profane Existence. I think there is way more sincerity there. I don't mean to say that major labels are all fucked, but their is not a personal and comfortable feeling there that I like. I think the indie company's really try to do what they can for you, and I really appreciate that. Most people who do these labels are in bands and do tour and know how it can be on the road. To be honest I have got more support from these labels than the majors.

HaC: You just returned from touring Europe again. Will we be seeing the band on "Real TV" from anything Bruce did on this tour?

Shane: No, I don't think we video-taped any ass whooping this time. People are not really into getting their noses busted open and their head cracked open these days. Bruce and I fight though, but who is going to hold the camera? So sorry to let you down.

HaC: Is there much of a difference between touring the states, as opposed to Europe, or Japan?

Shane: Yes, there is a big difference. When you tour Europe things worked out perfect because everything is well organized. There is always food, beer, lots of support, also a place to sleep where ever you play, there is no hassles. If you ever toured the states... then you know this is not always the case. The way they do shows over there is a lot like if you're in a professional situation, you know? But it's all 100% DIY. You play squats and it's all well organized and you get paid with no bullshit and they take care of you. In the states... there is always problems with where to throw a gig, if the cops are going to come, just stuff like this. Don't get me wrong... I love touring the states, and there are great places to play, and great people, but overall, you do run into way more problems here. We don't really have any more problems because we have been doing it for so

long and have built good friendships with a lot of people, promoters, and bands. Japan has a lot of the same vibe as Europe, but you will play all clubs, they have their shit together as well, and is a good place to play. Really great people!!

HaC: It seems obvious that places like California, New York, and New England are hot spots for heavy bands. I have heard surprisingly that places like Arizona and Oklahoma have really good scenes as well. Is there any truth to this rumor?

Shane: Well, we have played all these places and I think there is some truth to it. A scene isn't

different stuff to get a different vibe and try to relax because we are usually doing long flights.

HaC: Does Belgium really have the best beer in Europe?

Shane: Well, I know that they got the strongest beer that I ever drank. Fucking thick ass stuff!! I was a mess, making a mess, creating a mess fucking shit housed!! My favorite beers are German and Austrian though.

HaC: A lot of great bands that came up about the same time you guys did have either gone on to being bad metal bands now, or broken up, even

dropping out of the scene. How do you guys keep lasting year after year, and not comprising your sound? What do you feel about some of the newer bands coming up? Is there any band that you can compare to the quality of Doom, Capitalist Causalities, Destroy, etc.?

Shane: We just believe in what we do and we still love playing grind core. I think Phobia is a genuine band. It was never a phase for us like those bands that are here one minute and gone the next. We were doing this before

them and we will be doing it after them, you know? I think when you still believe in a cause and still expressing your views in a harsh manner your going to still have that integrity. I think being an anarchists I owe it to the community of revolutionaries to stay strong and dedicated to a point of persistence, this is very important, because the scene suffers because of incompetent assholes who talk a lot of shit and really do nothing for a scene or a movement.

HaC: Who is the one person that would never be seen at a Phobia show (because they don't even know what grind core is) that you would like to be able to perform to?

Shane: Shit... what a question.. wasn't ready for this one. There is probably a hundred people. I would say my grandpa Scotty. He was a crazy Scottish guy and would probably kick the shit out of everybody. I really think he would have appreciated such violent music, maybe its where I get my hostility from, who knows?

HaC: Word association: Say first thing that comes to your head.

HaC: Politics.

Shane: Kill.

HaC: '90s hardcore.

Shane: Not as good as the '80s.

HaC: DIY

Shane: Lose your apartment, but have fun doing it.

HaC: Rap Music.

Shane: Money and bitches.

HaC: Mosh.

Shane: Mullets, metal, tight pants, and Reeboks.
Interview by Gabe/OHEV.



measured by the amount of people, but the integrity and the attitude that follows, you know? I would say the craziest place is probably Denver, CO, this is a 100% grind core town, nutty mother fuckers there!!! New Mexico will go off also. I am not a big fan of the East Coast; we have good shows but that attitude is just different than ours. They have a lot more going on than a lot of places, so they are more spoiled in a sense.

HaC: How do you guys pass the time driving from shows to shows? What have you been listening to lately?

Shane: Well, passing the time can be very dangerous in the Phobia van, you better sleep with one eye open at all times because someone is going to fuck with you. You are going to get a ass in your face, maybe written on, farted on, beer spilled on you, stuff stuck to you, and will stay there until you figure it is on you. I think we can be a brutal while traveling. We all have different personalities, so there can be conflict. But on a responsible note we vomit outside of the van and not inside. Well, we try!! We do communicate and take care of band business, there is always band business, you know? Well, there is driving music and then there is flying music. When we are driving we always listen to Willie Nelson. This is a must, and is mandatory!! I don't think you can even be in the band if you don't like Willie. We listen to all sorts of stuff, bands that give us their music, lots of blues, old country, pretty much a lot of stuff. When we fly I guess we are listening to stuff on headphones, so it's personal, you know? I listen to like Duran Duran, the first Pearl Jam CD, some Wolf Pack—just

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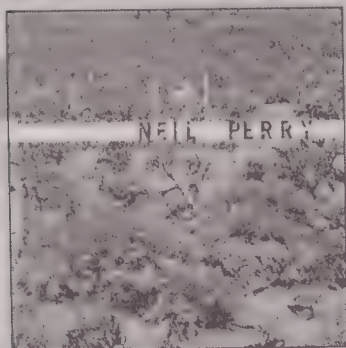
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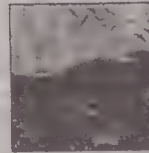


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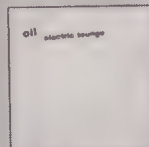
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The Flying Folk Army

The Flying Folk Army creates one of the greatest musical sounds that anyone can dance to. They are relatively unknown beyond activist circles as they all lead full lives and use the part-time project as an extension of their hearts and play mostly at protests and what-not for like-minded folk. But, that isn't to say people who aren't activists can't listen to them. The Flying Folk Army is more than a folk musical protest and is more than just for the tight knit community called Activism. The Flying Folk Army holds community next to their hearts and they'd like anyone to enjoy their music and hope you'll join them at their shows.

They play political songs but they do it in a way that isn't preachy but fun. Then again, as I was interviewing them, I realized their main goal is to have fun and help you have fun and put a smile on your face even in the most depressing of times. One of their main goals is to hopefully add more future activists to the world or even just people to help create a more loving community in their town or city. I must say though, the people that do show up at their shows have so much energy and love for the band and when you join them, I think you will, too. —Interview by Brian Disagree

HaC: Unfortunately, every member of the Army couldn't be here for various reasons so could you give me a run down of who's in the band, what you contribute to the band and possibly your interests in life.

Megan: Our interests in life?

HaC: Yeah.

Shawn: Interests in life for those members that aren't here right now...? Aw, this'll be great. (Megan and Alison laughs)

Alison: We're going to make shit up. (giggle)

Shawn: Let's start with John... (Alison giggles)

Megan: Okay, we should just do the run down for who's in the band. How about that? So, right now there are six people in the band. There's myself, Megan. I play the fiddle and assorted other instruments and I sing. Then there's Jonathon Teague and he plays percussion. Duane Murrin on Guitar.

Shawn: Russel Sholberg on bass. Alison...

Alison: And me, I play accordion and trumpet and clarinet.

Shawn: Oh, and me. I play guitar and penny whistle and sing.

Megan: The second component was what are our interests...?

HaC: What your interests are in life.

Megan: Interests in life... Well, I have many interests in life... I'm a local activist. I do a lot of work in the East Van political community. So I guess that's my dominant interest outside of the band as well as computer stuff. I do computer work for a living and as a hobby and all of that.

Shawn: I want to eat George W. Bush's hot guts. (Alison giggles) That's my interest in life right now.

Megan: Your interests are way more interesting than mine...

HaC: Is that live?

Shawn: No. I don't think you can say that anymore. It's post-Sept 11th so you can't be that off the cuff anymore. My interests in life is seeing the world go back to before Sept. 11th again. Actually, that's not aiming that high is it?

Megan: No, it's not.

Alison: No. But, it's a good start, I guess.

Megan: How about anarchist utopia?

Shawn: Yes, anarchist utopia, there you go.

Alison: I like music and theatre and world peace. I write music for theatre when I'm not doing this and I play in a bunch of different bands and work in a bookstore.

HaC: Which bookstore is that?

Alison: Tangowood, it's a second-hand bookstore. Yeah, theatre's the other main interest.

HaC: On your website, you have a short animated comic about the herbicide Round-Up made by the Monsanto/

Pharmacia corporations. Could you tell me more about this product and about GMO organisms in general because it seems you are against the use of them within our human civilization and on Mother Earth.

Shawn: Phew. (Megan and Alison laugh) Well, Alison, you wrote the lyrics so...

Alison: I did. Well, it was kind of funny because we just got the idea for that song cause we heard they were breeding these new plants that were called "Round-Up Ready" Because they were supposed to be resistant to Round-Up which is this chemical that they spray to kill everything else, basically.

Shawn: My neighbor uses it on my lawn too and it's brutal stuff. It just leaves these swads of death everywhere.

Alison: Yeah, so it's kind of not a very pleasant thought to be eating something that's completely resistant to a chemical that strong. We just thought the name, "Round-Up Ready Round-Up," so that is where the idea for that song came from. John and I just sat down and we borrowed a whole bunch of Megan's material she had gathered on GM foods and we kind of gave ourselves a crash course. We took the phrases that we thought were catchy and we turned them into a song.

Shawn: Now that song is in a documentary this summer about Genetically Engineered foods. Yeah, it's called "De-constructing Supper" and it's out in the summer.

Megan: Yeah, I've done a lot of work on the GMO issue, like politically I've organized conferences and stuff. I think as a band we have certain political ethics that we don't really have all defined and laid out. But, generally the idea of the super constructed society we live in and the manipulation of all life, the environment, everything around us. It's an incredibly negative thing. Something like genetically engineered foods is just one example of the capitalists need to bend nature to the human will. It's so about commodity and sales and money and certain people becoming very wealthy at the mercy of everybody else.

Shawn: Monsanto doesn't even have genetically modified food in their own cafeteria...

Megan: In their cafeteria. (laughs)

Shawn: Come on.

HaC: Oh, really?

Megan: Yeah. So the genetically engineering revolution is sort-of, which it's being posed as very much like the green revolution of the '60s, which had a huge impact on places like India, a negative impact in a lot of ways. It's an extension of the whole politics around the earth and the environment as valuable in itself without the modification by human hands and without the bending of it to our will.

Alison: It definitely seems like a case of people playing with stuff and not knowing what the outcome is going to be. It's dangerous and I don't think people really know what they are dealing with. That was kind of the idea behind the song, too, I guess. People are doing all this stuff we don't know what's going to happen in a few generations what's going to happen to our food supply. I don't think the people that are doing this know what the outcome is, although they are trying to tell us it's really safe.

Shawn: The experiment is going on here though in North America basically.

Megan: Yeah, this is the experiment.

Shawn: Europe won't take the not labeling of things. But, it's slower here and they are just kind of watching to see... I think they are watching to see what our next Round-Up babies turns out like and that kind of thing.

Megan: More than the impact here is the impact in the third world. Because, where they can't get regulation here... Where they've really planted massive amounts of Round-Up crops or other kinds of genetically engineered crops is India, Indonesia... They're really promoting this Vitamin A rice in China and stuff like that. Basically where people don't have a lot of food options... It's like that's going to be where the big experimental tests are going to be done. That's what

the green revolution was about; it was about testing new kinds of crops and new kinds of production on people that really didn't have the ability to say no. So, we're a test market but even more so the whole world is their test market right now in terms of what is it going to do to people.

HaC: If this kind of thing totally backfires it could wipe out human civilization pretty much if they take it as far as they... Well, I guess they are taking it as far as they want.

Megan: Well, if our food supply is intolerably contaminated. That's the thing about is we do know that these traits will pass between... A Round-Up ready plant can actually pollinate other plants so you not only tamper with the one kind of... You have the genetically engineered food but then everything else around that can become contaminated with the genetically engineered organisms. It's even more dangerous when we get into things like genetically engineered animals. Like right now they are genetically engineering fish for example and that's all about food supply as well. It's fish for aquaculture and it's the same thing, when those fish get into the wild what do they actually do to the wild populations? We could actually see a time, which most organisms are genetically engineered or tainted by some kind of genetically engineering.

Shawn: My favorite is the cows that give human milk...

Megan: Yeah.

HaC: Oh really?

Shawn: (sarcastically) That's a good idea.

HaC: That seems pretty stupid.

Megan: Yeah. (laughs) They are working on it though.

Shawn: It does. They must have done a focus group that marketed this or something...

Megan: Women that don't want to breast feed anymore.

Shawn: Nice tall glass of human milk or something, you know.

HaC: That seems like all these things we are doing to nature seems really disturbing. We think we are gods of this planet and civilization and we can do whatever we want to whoever is living on this earth.

Megan: Well, that's the whole thing with the human genome project as well. It's a massively egotistical undertaking to say that somehow we mere mortals are going to be able to figure out what all the building blocks of life are. Not only figure out what they are but alter them in some way so they are safe and effective. How could we ever assume that kind of knowledge in such a complex environment that we live in?

Shawn: And, it's owned by the people that make paint and Coca-Cola and stuff. That's a bad idea to have those people... Their interests are just counter to humanity.

HaC: In reference to your song, "What Side Are You On?" It reminds me of my physically handicapped father who has been severely poor for the last fifteen years. He supports the B.C. Liberals' agenda and he supports capitalism. Why do you think he supports the very same people who'd like to see him living in the street?

Alison: Well, I guess that's probably not what they sold to him... (laughs)

HaC: Yeah.

Alison: ...I think they wrap it up in a very attractive package. I think a lot of people go for that because they don't see what's underneath it and they don't see what effect it's going to have once the stuff is actually implemented. I think a lot of people have reacted that way since the Liberals came into power. I actually noticed a bunch of stickers on cars today that I guess are to do with what they are doing to schools. They were saying like, "Bigger classes? We didn't vote for that." And there was another sticker that said, "Less specialized teachers? We didn't vote for that." I think a lot of people are getting that kind of reaction of like, "Oh, wait a minute... We didn't actually vote for all this stuff, we thought we were getting one thing and we were actually getting another thing."

Shawn: People are kind of having to rethink what government is actually for. Is government to cater to the interests of business or is government supposed to be some kind of check on those kinds of interests and work in the interests of people and the environment and future life and the country. Where as this government

we have the thinking is so short term and pro-business, people are waking up to that I think.

Megan: I also think it goes deeper than just this government. Because we obviously we had the NDP and the NDP was no fucking better in terms of what it did for people. Okay, it didn't do as much bad stuff as the Liberals but it didn't do a lot of good stuff, too. It's like any kind of system; people really have internalized the system of capitalism as well. So, it's like, "There is no other alternative but capitalism. Capitalism is it. What can we possibly do to change things? What other kinds of society can we possibly live in?" It's sort of like... "Well, this is the way it is and so..."

Shawn: It's like it's a natural... occurring logical thing.
Megan: A natural occurring phenomena that we live in a society that we live in a society for profit as opposed to human need. I think a lot of people have that confusion or they just don't see an alternative and then we get fed all this crap in the media all the time. There's this constant barrage of, "This is the way it is, get used to it. This is the way it is, get used to it."

Alison: People are only getting fed one view all the time they don't realize there could even be another. There's not another ideology out there unless they really look for it.

Megan: I think it's a deeper problem of like, why do people continue to support the systems that keep them down? Making six dollars an hour, or take away funding for like ADHD kids in schools or whatever. There's all these things that are being attacked right now by this government but people continue to support it or Mike Harris as a better example. Because he actually did all these horrible things, people fought against it and then the next election got elected again. You can say the same thing happened with the Socreds in 1983 in B.C., it was exactly the same scenario. It's just this internalized belief that nothing can ever really change anyway...

Shawn: That's just a challenge as an activist and I suppose as an artist, period. Trying to have some sort of vision and envision an alternative. That's a whole trick, if you can only resist what's currently wrong, you'll never really get anywhere, you have to try and...

Alison: You have to give people something else. You can't just resist, you have to say, "Well, here's what we could actually do."

HaC: So, do you think the media, corporations and capitalists are putting people under a mind control kind of thing cause the right-wing ideologies control pretty much all the mainstream media. They don't really allow any other ideologies or influences in their media; do you think that is a kind of mind control kind of thing? Are they experimenting with mind control just like say the CIA or something like that? (Megan laughs)

Shawn: Well, it's funny, yeah...

Megan: I don't think people are that brainwashed. I just think the system and the media has this amazing capacity to co-opt and absorb everything about us and turn it into their own thing. So it's like... take a protest movement, well The Gap did really effective marketing around protest clothing and stuff like that.

Shawn: Even though they were completely demolished in Seattle, they still managed to sell stuff... (chuckles)

Megan: Demolished in Seattle. (laughs) I think that the media is incredibly effective in taking anything we see as like... I think a lot of people don't look at what the government is doing right now and say, "Oh, that's great, they are cutting programs for disabled kids or whatever." I don't think people look at that and think, "That's a great thing." But at the same time it's sort of like gets absorbed into the media and spat back in this way. "Okay, maybe that's a little bit palatable or there's reasons for it..." I think it comes back to this whole thing of there is a lot of control over what we see, read and hear everyday. Because that control exists over what is sort of out there in the mass, the alternatives aren't there. It's not mind control so much that people don't see an alternative. It goes back to that last question or the last answer we were saying, people don't see that there is anything else is out there that this is always the way that it's been. But, mind control... I don't know.

Shawn: Mind Control? Well, TV is pretty much the

greatest mind control device ever devised I think really. We gotta get on TV; we could seriously control some minds. (Alison laughs) That's the thing, if we could get on TV... Well, nah, we won't do that well on TV maybe...

Megan: We're not TV...

Alison: We're not very pretty.

Megan: We're not very pretty, yeah.

Shawn: We're not TV friendly, that's the problem. But we could pay somebody to go on TV for us and advance our ideas, but you can't really play that game either.

HaC: What about bands like Chumbawamba or Rage Against The Machine that have been on TV? Do you think that Chumbawamba thing where they have some kind of a message on their chest on some MTV show or some talk show... Do you think that makes a difference?

Megan: No. Because it's that whole thing of co-optation absorbing counter culture. Rage Against The Machine is a really good example of that. They have big shows... thousands of people come to their shows, thousands of kids come to their shows. I think it's really great that they are doing what they are doing or they were out there what they were doing and I think Chumbawamba is an awesome band. But in terms of, does it have an overall impact? Not really, because this system of capitalism has this amazing ability to sort of ingest that and use it for its own ends. This whole thing in the music industry, do you sign with a label and do all that stuff, hoping that maybe you maybe have a platform? That's what bands do. But does it have a really have an overall impact? In a way it's like a little tiny drop of water in a huge sea of toxic waste.

Alison: Chumbawamba was the flavor of the month for that one song which was probably the least protest of any of their songs.

HaC: Was it like "Tubthumper," right, or something like that?

Megan: That whole album was the least political of all their albums.

Alison: They were big for a while and they had a label. It was sort of like, "Oh, they're a cool band and they are kind of left-wing." But that was their hook and that was their selling thing. Because they were being sold that way it sort of negated what they were saying in a way, too. They were cool and their label was really pushing them while they were hot. They're not really big anymore. They had their moment and now they are sort of mediocre again. I think people are so cynical about things too. Soon as you see a group like that even if they are on some TV show with a message on their TV shirts, people are so cynical about that, they're not really going to go, "Oh great, they're protesting." They are just going to say, "Oh well, it's another marketing ploy."

Megan: Now the cool thing about Rage Against The Machine and Chumbawamba particularly because they were bands that made a lot of money. I know from experience that they actually donate quite a lot of money to different political campaigns and stuff. Rage Against The Machine is really well known for supporting the Chiapas resistance movement and Chumbawamba when they play in Canada and stuff they give money to Anti-Racist Action and shit like that. So as far as it goes if artists have the ability to obtain that kind of money and fame and if they use it for good purposes, some of it for good ends. I think that's a really positive thing. So there's a positive contribution to that.

Alison: They are not out there as much. There's some people that have to put their name on everything. If bands like that that are taking their proceeds and just donating them and not making a big deal out of it, not making a big media thing about it. Then that's a very honest thing to do. That's the most honest thing you can do, to take your profits and donate them quietly, and not say, "Oh look at us... we're being activists so we're giving our money to this cause." And use it as another selling point.

HaC: What about bands like Rage Against The Machine... Say if they lived in million dollar mansions. They're actually activists if they are living the high life. They're not really pretending that they're political and sending out this message, they are political... But,

are they kind of being hypocritical living a rich lifestyle? I don't know if they live in mansions and drive in limos and stuff...

Megan: I don't think those guys, well maybe they are, I don't know...

Shawn: Maybe they live in like solar powered mansions and they recycle their garbage, I don't know...

Alison: I don't think you want to go and live in a cardboard box just to make a statement. You also don't want to be driving around in limos and consuming mindlessly because then that would totally negate what you were singing about.

Megan: Yeah.

Shawn: And there's a difference between being successful and raping the earth too. You can live a good life, ah, I don't know... It's just...

Megan: But I mean there's that whole hypocrisy and the whole rockstar thing right. It's like when a band like U2 comes out... U2 is supposed to be some political lefty band because they support environment causes or whatever. But, they're rockstars, they are totally rockstars. They are totally about that whole hierarchal, sexist system that exists in the rockstar world. There is hypocrisy there. I don't know how the members of Rage Against The Machine live or Chumbawamba, I think that Chumbawamba probably still live collectively cause they always did for a really long time and I heard that they do to a degree still do that. So obviously if their politics are really like what they are about, one would hope that those people that are political would continue to live in a way that is conscious. Again, you don't have to live in a cardboard box but...

Alison: Yeah, that's just as hypocritical.

Megan: (laughs) Yeah, it's another falsehood. It's like living...

Shawn: And being broke and not having anything doesn't really make you necessarily righteous in anyway either, you have to... Being active I guess is, is... I suppose if Rage Against The Machine and Chumbawamba are contributing something or they're firing people up or they're pushing people or they're making them ask questions that they haven't before maybe that's their days work done, I guess.

Alison: It's the best you can do.

HaC: Megan, you wrote the song "Mostly Crazy" about different parts of your family's past (everyone laughs), do you have a particular story about one of your relatives or ancestors you'd like people to hear (Megan and Alison laugh) that you think they'd find amusing or fascinating?

Alison: As long as they don't read your article.

Shawn: Good thing Alison and I don't have any fascinating and bizarre relatives.

Megan: (in a nasal voice) You know my family really hates that song... (laughs)

Alison: Gee, I wonder why...

Megan: That song is about people in my family and all of the verses in the song have like a barring on some member in the family or some group of members in the family. My family came to B.C. about a hundred years ago and they basically lived in rural B.C. I was raised in Victoria, but they lived in rural B.C. and they're kind of all hillbillies and rednecks and they shoot guns at each other and they sometimes kill people and they're bikers and they're... that's them, you know. So, there is the story about my Uncle Sam who... this is like back in the 1920s. The town drunk was laying in the middle of the road and my Uncle Sam didn't want to stop his pickup truck so he drove over the town drunk. That's the kind of story that's in my family. (laughs)

Shawn: But, you could drive over people back then they'd be okay. Not like today...

Megan: (laughs) Yeah, there's no high powered cars like today, it was just some old 1920s jalopy.

Shawn: These SUVs will kill you if they drive over you.

Alison: Didn't he kill the town drunk though?

Megan: He killed the town drunk, yeah.

Shawn: He killed him? Awe...

HaC: Seriously?

Shawn: He wasn't okay.

Megan: He wasn't okay.

Shawn: Right. That only happens in cartoons.

Megan: It's funny cause I wrote that song and it's kind of a humorous song but I don't like to do it so much anymore... I don't know I guess I feel like in a way that song... I wrote it and I was making fun of the people in my family but really they're just regular working class people in a lot of ways. Working class poor people and yeah they're white trash and it's kind of weird for me now and I'm like... Should I even like... Yeah these are funny stores and we certainly laugh about them in the family and there is all sorts of bizzaro family feuding and everything else. But do I really wanna like... Is it funny or is it just the way lots of people are living and lots of people have been living. Especially in rural B.C. say 1920s to 1960s or whatever and that was when they were all young and doing really crazy things. I have cousins now that are my age that are still pretty crazy. I don't know but they are all living in some ways really normal for their communities, like it's weird... It's not normal for where I live or for who I am. So, I have weird feelings about that now. I have a lots of weird family stories.

Shawn: I don't even think rural communities are any weirder than urban communities...

Megan: They just have different weirdnesses.

Shawn: It's just that everybody knows each other so everybody hears about it. Weirdness happens anonymously in urban societies.

Alison: That's true.

Shawn: The town drunk got run over the intersection two blocks from my house but I don't know either of them.

Megan: Yeah, the person that ran over him or the drunk. (laughs)

Shawn: Exactly, because everyone knows each other so they turn into stories. But in urban societies just all this weird shit happens anonymously. We're an urban band, we're urban people I suppose...

Megan: Yeah.

Shawn: So when we sing about rural issues it kind of comes across a certain way. Especially this neighborhood, stuff goes on here I don't think many small towns in B.C. can touch. (giggles)

Megan: It's true.

HaC: In response to your tune "Uncle Sam" could you explain who Uncle Sam is in response to why you are against the war he creates?

Shawn: I want to eat George W. Bush's hot guts. (laughs)

Megan: (laughs) Who is Uncle Sam... Uncle Sam.

Shawn: Uncle Sam is the whole machine... that they're raging against. That machine that all the kids are raging against. That's who he is.

Megan: Dwayne wrote that song in 1991 during the first Gulf War actually.

Shawn: He didn't think it was a political song.

Megan: He didn't think it was a political song, he just wrote it. He was some 18-year-old kid and we're all old as you can tell. We were all 18 during the first gulf war...

Shawn: (laughs) That was the first time I got arrested.

Megan: So, yeah he wrote that in 1991 and he was just watching the news and not really all that happy about what was going on so he wrote that. For us as a group... it's one of our big songs we do that we've done since the very beginning cause it is about fighting the war machine. Really the whole Uncle Sam concept, the cultural, economic, imperialist concept, Uncle Sam is everywhere. You go to any country and there is an influence there.

Alison: And it gets more and more relevant. It's just one of those songs... it doesn't get dated because it's always, always relevant. Which is really too bad. I really wish that song would cease to be relevant.

Megan: Become irrelevant. (giggles)

Shawn: There's the one line that we always have to change to keep it current. What was it... "Don't ask don't give a damn, next stop..."

Megan: "Afghanistan."

Shawn: "Afghanistan. Next stop, Iraq again. Don't ask don't want to know. Next stop is Kosovo."

Megan: We always have to change it to make it relevant to what war is going on.

Shawn: We've had to change it like eight times in the four years that we've been together. That one rhythm. Who are they killing now? Oh, okay now we'll just change it to that.

Allison: Pretty sad.

Megan: Yeah, it's pretty depressing.

Shawn: We can't figure out how we're going to rhyme Colombia though or even the Philippines, that'll be a tough one.

Megan: Yeah. We're like thinking where's the next war... We know that America is going to attack Colombia soon and America is already in the Philippines right now.

Shawn: And stuff doesn't rhyme with those countries. So, it's a challenge.

Megan: No... so we don't know what to do. Only if they wage a war that we can rhyme with.

Shawn: Yeah, exactly. All those istans are good.

Megan: Yeah.

Shawn: Uzbekistan. They could of raided there and we could fit it in easy.

Megan: But, yeah, it's the whole concept of what America is doing everywhere in the world and war is the most obvious manifestation of Uncle Sam obviously because it results in people being murdered en-masse. But, if you look just say at cultural imperialism and all the dodgy stuff America does besides just waging war like genetic engineering or whatever. Obviously those are all manifestations of that imperialist, impulsive America.

Alison: And a lot of countries giving in to the one power. Everybody is kind of either fighting against them or knuckling under to them.

Shawn: It's our most downloaded song as well.

Megan: That's only because I put it on the Tao web page.

Shawn: Ohhh... It's working.

Megan: It's working.

Shawn: Lots of people listening to that one.

HaC: It also kind of seems that Uncle Sam is trying to take over the world. Do you find that to be true?

Shawn: He already has, man. He already has.

Megan: Yeah.

HaC: That's true.

Shawn: The former attorney general has stated US policy was, "To dominate non-violently if possible but by violence if necessary every other country in the world." That was the former attorney general. They just came right out and said it.

Megan: Yeah.

Shawn: It's no secret. It's not conspiracy theory. Read what they say. Fuck, it's obvious. It's their policy. It's their official policy.

Megan: Yeah, it's their official policy. Especially around Latin America and stuff like that. The official policy of the United States is to dominate the Americas, period. So things like Venezuela recently where they had a coup that was then overturned. That coup was orchestrated by the American government there's no question about it. They wouldn't call it a coup, that was the thing, they said, "Oh, well, Chavez has been deposed in Venezuela. But, that's his own fault." That's what the US was saying. It's like, "Ah, okay, so it's not a coup." But, if it was, say, the left wing takes over in one of those countries it's a coup but if it's the right-wing country it's not a coup. It's everywhere. I was just in Cuba and as much as Cuba is an anti-American state in a lot of ways there is still lots of American influence and especially lots of American influence on the people. The people really believe that America will make their lives better if they can just get to the states it will make their lives better. They're buying the same bill of goods that everybody else is buying, that America is the best country in the world. It's just gross.

Shawn: Everybody here is up in arms about Northern Command. Losing our sovereignty, being part of this military alliance but the thing is they haven't even asked us to join the Northern Command. It's already setup, we're not invited. We're just being commanded. That's what that song is about. Still you know, it's ever revolving I guess. Same words but they have new meanings every time.

Megan: Every time. Yeah.

HaC: Do you think there's a possibility of all the countries secretly getting together that are...

Shawn: Secretly? Have you read the new bill? Have you read bill C-36?

HaC: No, I haven't.

Shawn: Is it 36 or 42? I heard they changed it.

Megan: 35.

Shawn: 35. You can't keep a secret anymore.

HaC: That's true.

Shawn: It's ridiculous and they can tap your phone and not tell you for five years now or something. Is it more than five years?

Megan: Oh, that's 36.

Shawn: You've got to read that bill. It's nuts. There are no secrets anymore.

Megan: Countries getting together secretly? What do you mean...

HaC: Getting together against Uncle Sam secretly. I guess that's kind of hard to do now a days...

Megan: What countries though?

Shawn: It's sound like you are talking about terrorism to me. (Brian and Megan laugh) I don't know if I want to continue this conversation. In case you haven't noticed the DEA has got offices setup in this city here now and the RCMP are all working together.

Megan: Well, the FBI has got offices here now, too.

Shawn: A lot has changed this year. I don't think countries can get together secretly, no.

Megan: Yeah, they are all too busy toadying up to the United States.

HaC: Megan, there seems to be so much history within the song "Hands Off," even more so that I couldn't sum up a response in one question. Could you explain to me what the history behind the song is?

Megan: That song is an anti-police brutality song. I wrote it coming out a series of experiences in my life. Basically all those things are components of my life that have happened. I was arrested when I was 19 breaking into a squat because I lived on the streets for a while when I was younger and being beaten up by the police. Obviously that's where that song comes from, there's that sort of experience with the police. Being poor, being marginalized, living on the streets in Vancouver and just the absolute violence of the state in terms of how it deals with so many people. The last verse of that song was brought out of the 1998 Hyatt demonstration. That is what inspired that verse. Because people were basically protesting non-violently and they sent the riot cops out and beat everybody up and bloodied people quite badly.

Shawn: They didn't spray that time.

Megan: They didn't spray that time, they just beat everybody up.

Shawn: The spray was bad, big in the media so they just brought out the clubs.

Megan: ...the clubs.

Shawn: I saw a guy using a mountain bike pretty well, too.

Megan: (giggles) Yup.

Shawn: It was pretty scary.

Megan: So, it's just my experience since I was a teenager dealing with the police as a poor person, as a marginalized person or as an activist. I'm not poor, marginalized now in the same way obviously but I'm still an activist and I steal deal with police brutality fairly regularly. Even just policing in this neighborhood in east Vancouver. I live across from Grandview Park now so I see the cops all the time just picking on people and harassing them and kicking them around. How can we live in a system where we allow this group of thugs basically to control our lives and to treat us like that? Basically, that's the song.

HaC: When a cop says I want to be a cop when they are growing up or whatever. Why do you think they want to be a policeman or a policewoman or whatever? They obviously don't know all about capitalism and how the whole system is setup. Do you think they kind of want that power and that authority?

Megan: Absolutely. I think there is two camps of people who become cops. I think there is people who are absolutely sadistic control freaks. I went to high school

with people that wanted to be cops and they were the meanest, most sadistic shitty kids that you ever knew. They were assholes. I have known a couple cops in my life that went into it like the other camp of people as people who sort of see it as a on the streets kind of social work, "I'll go out and I'll help my community." And I have met a couple people who I really honestly believe that's why they went into it and they still try and do that in their job. When I was living in Victoria I was involved in a sexual assault trial there many years ago and I met one of the cops that was doing the sex crimes beat and she was one of the most amazing people I've ever met for lots and lots of reasons. Her total focus was basically on sex crimes. She was a real feminist and she had all these politics around protecting women and helping women and stuff like that. Obviously there are those people but they're so few and far between. I knew one guy when I was going to university who was a cop and he was back in school getting more education. He went into it with that perspective, "I want to help people," but realized once he got into the force that was he most ineffective way of helping people and he was educating himself to get out of it. He was like, "I just need to get out this. I'm going to be like the rest of the assholes I work with if I keep working in this environment." Because that environment will change, even the good people that go into it are changed by that really corrupted and controlled environment. It's obviously a very complex thing but I think there's lots of people that go into it with really sadistic and controlling purposes. We see them on streets everyday we've all had encounters with really unreasonable cops. You just think, "What is this about? This not on the bounds of reasonable control in society." It comes down to a personal need to control for some of them.

Shawn: I like the way they teach them how to never to answer a question, they only ask a question. The way you can tell you are talking to a cop is you say, "How was your day today?" and he says, "Why do you want to know what kind of day I had?" They teach them that right. That starts to do things with your mind after a while when you are trained to answer questions with questions. I think that's not healthy.

Alison: And you are trained to use euphemisms. They have to speak in a very certain lingo all the time and write things down while you are waiting.

Shawn: It's training. It's all training that's the problem. Too much training is bad. (laughs)

HaC: When the corporate mainstream news speak about protesters, you always hear them wag around the term "Professional Protestor" trying to coin the people who dissent or protest oppressive policies within capitalism and as a bunch of people who make a living on protesting and are just there to rattle the bucket. In your view what is a professional protestor?

Shawn: Well, I made a lot of money as a "professional protestor" and I feel bad about it now. (Megan laughs) People would pay you so much money... a professional protestor? That is such a funny term. That is a stretch, man. That is like, god, you feel it still spinning when you read it.

Alison: I don't even know what that means. That's the media trying to say that there is people who just pick any cause and go out because they like to show up at things. It trivializes what people do when they're going out and protesting.

Shawn: It's weird that they try and insult them by calling them a professional, "Oh, you are a professional at that." As if they very word calling them professional makes you unbelievable or meaning you only do it for profit. It's just ridiculous.

Alison: I guess in that sense it does. They are trying to imply that there's troublemakers who will show up to anything that's anti something. It trivializes it.

Shawn: "Oh, you are not a real journalist, you are just a professional journalist."

Megan: But, the thing about that is that like, yeah, lots of us go out to different issues. I've been to demos on pretty much anything you can go to a demo on. It's not that I'm a professional troublemaker. It's that I really hate the capitalist system and I see all the things that come out of it...

Shawn: Come on, you make a lot of cash at those demos.

Megan: I don't. I don't make any money. But, I see things like war and poverty and healthcare cuts and racism and sexism and the anti-sovereignty movement. They are linked to capitalism. You can't pick one; they are all part of the same system. If you are going to fight the system you've got to fight it on every front. So lots of us are involved in lots of things. It bothers me because there's that whole perspective that, No, you only work on one issue otherwise you are somehow less credible or somehow this or you're somehow that.

Shawn: Yeah, it's somewhere like Seattle where you had thousands and thousands of people coming out of all sorts of different issues. They don't say, "Boy, everybody has a stake in this." They are saying, "Oh, this woman has no focus."

HaC: The first time the Flying Folk Army ever played was four years ago at a Mayday rally. Can you tell me when then this holiday first originated and what it is about?

Alison: This is the skill testing part.

Megan: When it first originated? (Shawn chuckles) What are you asking us bizzaro labor history questions? I actually don't remember what the whole history of Mayday is. But, Mayday is a celebration of working class power and struggle and culture. Obviously there are demonstrations around the world every Mayday, labor demonstrations. In most of Europe, Mayday is a holiday. A worker's holiday. In North America it's not a workers holiday anymore. It used to be.

Shawn: We have Labor Day though.

Megan: We have Labor Day. That was a creation of the American state to disempower Mayday basically. So yeah it's a celebration of working class history and culture, protest and struggle and all that kind of stuff. But the history of it? It goes back a really long ways. I don't really remember. I know it in my head somewhere it's there.

Shawn: The tip of your brain.

HaC: The Flying Folk Army is a pro-union band. Can you tell me when unions were first started and if you think they have as much relevance today as they did when they were first created? (Brian, Megan and Alison laugh)

Megan: Political history. Ah, what are we going to use for a story. They go way back in... obviously they go way back in Europe. In North America there is a long labor tradition here. I can't answer all these when did they start things. (laughs) There's all these different political movements... that basically formed as what we know as industrial trade unions. They'd come out of the craft guilds and stuff like that. Today, industrial trade unions...

Alison: I guess it was the industrial revolution I guess that sort of started all that like back in the 1880s... the 1860s.

Megan: If you go way back and you look at the chart and stuff like that which were very active in the 1700s. There's this whole sort of history. But in terms of North America history and say what the big union gains that were in the last hundred years or whatever. Unions have been incredibly instrumental in North America in terms of just fighting for our basic things, fighting against racism, fighting against sexism in the workplace, fighting for things like maternity benefits, fighting for same sex spousal benefits being the most recent stuff in the last decade or so.

Shawn: Here in B.C. we have a huge... all through the 1900s, early 1900s with the miners on the island. The union movement there in the music... a lot of music came out of that, too. When they sent the Sea Forth Highlanders from Vancouver over to shoot miners in Nanaimo basically and there's songs about that. The mines out there on the island, you had miners who were dying at five times higher rate than anywhere else. Even in Cape Breton they were dying more out here than there were dying there. Because they would dig way, way out in the ocean shelf and they would get flooded down there. So that's where the union movement started in this province I think. The roots of that are still here. There was actually a lot of music that came out of that to. We don't play much of it though.

Megan: But relevance today... Well, I'm in union. I'm in actually two or three unions now. Most of us have been unionized at one time or another or are now. Unions today still play I think a really instrumental role in fighting for the rights of workers and sometimes of poor people. Sometimes I think they fall short of the things that I think unions should be fighting for. But, they certainly...

Alison: I guess they are falling in the trap of being bureaucracy. I think that's the main drawback these days is that they have gotten so big so they are becoming a business in that way.

Megan: Yeah.

Alison: But, I mean they are still very effective. Even being an actor as a union member, it's absolutely important. As a musician I don't think my union does a lot for me. They could it's unfortunate but they don't...but, yeah, I still think they are very useful. I don't always agree with what unions do but when we sing songs that are old union songs it's paying a tribute to where they came from and what they're still fighting for.

Shawn: Unions are portrayed as barriers to profit and barriers to efficiency and this by the mainstream media and things but I think they also provide a forum for working people to discuss things like the environment, like the sustainability. We're a resource-based economy...well; who's going to... the government is going to manage our resources? Obviously not, they're just going to give cart blanche to whatever business. So I mean workers who work who know our fish stocks, who know our forests have to somehow manage and organize to make these kind of environmental and sustainable connections. I think that is really starting to happen with the union movement. You've got steel workers marching with Greenpeace. Not always right...

Megan: Yeah, but sometimes.

Shawn: But that dialogue is starting to happen definitely where the future of work is seen as being tied to the viability of our environment and our lives. So I think unions are still providing a real forum and an organized body to advance those sort of ideas.

Alison: Yeah.

Megan: Absolutely.

Shawn: And, they pay us really well, too. (Alison and Megan laugh) They pay us really fairly. So we never turn down union shows.

Alison: And that's a part of why they are fighting for.

Shawn: Yeah, exactly.

Megan: Fair wages.

Alison: Those are the only gigs we get that we are paid fairly for. I don't think that's a coincidence.

Shawn: At all. (laughs)

Alison: It's certainly not a coincidence actually.

HaC: When people come to see the Flying Folk Army live, what can they expect?

Megan: (screams out) Fun.

Alison: Noise. (Megan laughs)

Shawn: They can expect to get my sweat on them probably if they get too close.

HaC: Is that GMO sweat?

Shawn: No, no...

Megan: No. Not genetically engineered sweat.

Shawn: Not genetically engineered.

Alison: It's totally organic.

Shawn: It's completely natural. (Brian laughs) That's why I get my own microphone.

Megan: Loud, fun, dancing music that you can...

Alison: And you might come away with a few more political opinions than they had before, hopefully. And, maybe they'll absorb some of that.

Shawn: They'll meet some just happy, funny awesome people in the crowds, too. We always get great people come out to our shows. That's why they are so good, too.

Alison: I don't think we would still be going and still be popular if we just sat up there and hit people over the head. There's a lot of really depressing stuff happening in the world and we're trying to write about it but we're also trying to make people have a good time while they are questioning society. (Shawn and Alison laugh)



For months I tell myself that I have so much time to write my next column, or "remember that for the next column." Then the deadline comes flying up on me and I forget everything and every idea I had. This time is no exception. I won't know the effects of HaC #39 for some time, but I know #38 caused some shit. Again lots

of hate mail, with a few letters that were against me but at least willing to talk. There are a few letters that I still have to respond to. If you have not heard back from me it's either cause I lost your address or I am still replying to the other haters out there. I don't mind at all really... I guess any reaction is a good sign. I think my points are missed and I am misunderstood... Shhhh! Can you hear the violins playing my song? I guess my overall point is that I am struggling with my thoughts and my feelings about the world around me. I am lost and confused and trying to figure it out.

"So when are you going to cash in your rainchecks? (And on and on and on...) I'm not dead yet. Ambitions... Sorry but I have none... I'm just a confused kid with the masses telling me to join tradition, but I just can't..." — Give Up The Ghost

The funny thing is that in most of the letters I got people accuse me of being reactionary... which is true. I will not print names of people who stated that, but writing letters half cocked and bitter is also very reactionary... the whole damn world is reactionary. "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction."— Newton's Third Law, so shut the hell up. I get accused of repetition... well you have to see the regurgitated shit that I get in these letters. Do you all read the same books? Quote the same people? Do any of you look in the mirror at yourselves? I admit my faults and know them... I was dead wrong for some of the things I said in #38. I admit it... I stand firm on other things that I said. Shaun wrote a letter to HaC about my column and he is right in most of what he said, except he misread what I wrote about protesters... I did not threaten violence against all protesters. I did however express it towards the ones that called for the killing of American soldiers and a Columbia University Professor. Just like I have been known to throw a punch at assholes in bars grabbing girls. I would no hesitate to back up my words or feelings by any means necessary. I did not ever call protesters "wimpy hippies," but Shaun anyone that tries to bloody this face stands to lose some teeth. I may go down bloody but I will not back down on what I feel. So thank you all for the criticism. Please keep the letters and correspondence going. I wrote Hason Dates "This is how friendships are started"... with a word.

"As it gets harder everyday to say maybe someday, and maybe someday I will, but today I know we can't remain here. I cannot stay right

here" — Mind Over Matter

Updates, setbacks you name it I got it. So for over a year now I have been waiting to take my tests to become a firefighter. I was all set to go and destroy the test. My first attempt resulted in paper work errors, it seems the city sent me a letter to come take the test but didn't let the testing center know I was coming. The testing center set me up with another date, but just a few days shy of my new test date I fell ill, and actually required surgery. So after a month or so of healing and trying to get back into my pre-surgical prowess I am facing my new test date on October 15th, 2003. I am nervous and excited. I feel ready but have doubts with the set back from the surgery.

In the last few weeks of July I was not feeling very well. I had been running fevers, but in my line of work you get minor illnesses from being around the sick all the time. I didn't think anything of it and just worked through it. The days went on and I felt worse and worse, but I thought I might also have something to do with my excessive training for the fire test. On August 4th I woke up with pain that I had not felt in ages. I couldn't move and I could barely scream the pain got worse and worse. In a panic I tried to get up from bed but just couldn't. I was dizzy; I started to throw up. I managed to get myself up to call for help; the ambulance came and took me to the hospital. Before my mother and Morgan could arrive at the hospital, the ER doctor had sent me for tests and was running around barking orders about how I need to have surgery "STAT," my heart dropped and I was scared. My mother and Morgan came into the ER as they were wheeling me off for emergency surgery. Off I went... what had happened was a kidney stone escaped my kidney and clogged my ureter. It was a nine-millimeter stone, which is pretty huge for kidney stones. So the stone clogs my ureter backing up all the toxins in my body into my right kidney. That was the reason I was running fevers. At some point your kidney should shut down, you become septic, you go into a seizure, and you are a vegetable for the rest of your life or if you are lucky you just have renal failure and you need dialysis for the rest of your life. I was luckier then lucky. I had the surgery and everything was taken care of before the bad stuff. But I had to be catheterized, and for 2 weeks I had this tube that went from my kidney to my bladder to drain out fluids. So every time I pissed I had so much pain I had to piss sitting down and then I would throw up from the pain. After the 2 weeks was up I had to have another surgery to remove all the tubes and fun stuff from me. Then I had another 2 weeks of pissing blood and urinary track infections. Now that I told you all this are you thinking about my penis? You have not lived until you have had your pee hole dilated to fit surgical tools.

While I was out from work resting my pee hole and insides, I was informed that I had been transferred from my station in East New York to Staten Island where I live. They are opening a new station here on Staten Island and they wanted to bring experienced EMT's and paramedics to fill the roster. It's like getting a raise in pay with the money I save on tolls and gas traveling back and forth to work. My tolls alone driving to work were over \$100 a month, and gas costs were very high, too. I have only been working out here for a few days now and I am liking it so far. The

stress level is lower, you still have some funny stories to tell but at the end of the day you don't feel as beat up. I needed to get out of where I was. I think that if you read my old columns you can notice a change in me from column to column. I was feeling rather lost towards my job. I don't think I changed the person that I was, just changing in emotions. I was only think about getting home safe at the end of the night. Like I said I have only been out here a few days so I keep thinking that the change is just well needed. By next column I should have more to share, since I am still like on a honeymoon with my new position.

When I say I needed to get out of where I was, I am not lying. Things had been getting shady in the neighborhood I was working between the neighborhood gangs and us. Shortly before my transfer my partner Kevin and I stepped out of the ambulance to use a bathroom, and all the windows were shot out of the ambulance behind us. That night was a crazy night we had to meet with chiefs and police and lots of people in suits. Make a long story short our transfers were expedited and we were both sent to the new station in Staten Island.

It was a strange turn of events one that Kevin and I joked about. When I started my career in EMS I was put in Vehicle #344. That truck was out for repair when my partner Andre was killed. Andre was driving in vehicle #195; vehicle #180 had been destroyed in the WTC collapse. So when it came time for us to get a new truck they gave us a brand new vehicle #180 in memory of Andre. I guess that was the FDNY's way of memorializing both losses. Well anyway Vehicle #180 was the ambulance we were in when the windows were shot out, so that was being held for investigation they put us back in vehicle #344 for our remaining days in East New York. We had come full circle; it felt pretty good to be back in our old truck. We had so many memories in that truck to talk about so our last days there were spent talking about all the things Andre had taught us along with the stupid things we did in our truck during our down time.

They said when I left that I would miss it. There are things that I miss and things that I will never ever look back on. The one thing I know I will miss is being at the top of my game all the time. I think I am very good at what I do. All the rookies would always get stuck working with me as a trainer and I liked that aspect of it. In my new station you will never see a rookie. So I think I will miss that part of it the most. Like I said before I think by the next column I will have more to talk about. Right now everything is so fresh that I am just enjoying my new station. The transfer may be short lived. If everything goes to plan with my tests I have been told I will be in the Firefighter Academy in December or March. You have no idea how nervous and excited I am to be so close. I don't think too much of failure it's not an option to me. I just keep working harder and harder to knock down walls that get put in front of me... my surgery, this test, and this job... they are all just walls I have to break down. Holy shit, I sound like a Youth of Today song!

"Break... Down... The Walls! We'll break down the walls!" — Youth Of Today

"I used to think that the day would never come. I'd see delight in the shade of the morning sun. My morning sun is the drug that brings me near, to the childhood I lost, replaced by fear I used to think that the day would never come. That my life would depend on the morning sun" — New Order

With new stations come new people, new faces and rehashing the "getting to know you" conversations. This is I think will always be a problem for me. First and foremost I was Andre's partner, so people always feel the need to talk to me about him and his death. I love talking about Andre and all the good things I could talk about. New faces I meet talk about him as if they knew him so well, but a minute into the conversation I know they didn't even know him. I start think they just want some new piece of gossip about what happened to him.

The other thing that bothers me with people, who talk about September 11th, they go on and on about the overtime they had to do in the aftermath. They act surprised when I tell them that I was there for it all. It's like you are some sort of oddity that they are viewing through glass. They then proceed to again question you looking for new tales to tell. I was working with this guy Salvatore, he is a really nice guy but he wanted to talk about the events that took place. I tell him that I don't really want to talk about it and that I never really speak to anyone about it. But he just kept pressing me, I would sit in silence and he would just talk about things he has heard from word of mouth. I finally broke one night and told him, "You know what gets me? Shoes. All day trudging through debris and dust all I kept finding was shoes. I couldn't even make out so much as a desk but all these shoes would churn up as you walked knee deep in dust and concrete debris." He looked at me like I had ten heads. The fact of the matter is something as small as that still kind of makes me cry. Some of the shoes were bloody some had parts still attached to them. This is what I see when I talk about it. Do I really want to think about my family crying and screaming knowing that we had lost people we love?

What bothers me, is that this is the "getting to know you" shit we talk about at work. I can't tell you anything about most of the people at my station but I sure can tell you what they were doing on September 11th. When I meet people outside of work I want to know about their families, what they like to do maybe their hobbies. Not "did you see the people jumping?" or "where you working the night Andre was killed?" This is not normal behavior. It's two years since 9-11, and it's a little over a year that Andre died. I am still very much bothered by all that went on. I am doing my best to deal with bottled up anger and fear. I want a life for myself, as much as I this is all a part of me I need to catalog it all and put it away. I don't think of it as bottling it up as much as I think of it as moving on. I think for the rest of my life I will talk about it and mention it. I just hate talking about it like it's a coffee table discussion. Maybe it is just me. Maybe I am disconnected with the regular world. Do you guy's talk about the worst experiences in your life to complete stranger as a means of introductions?

It is common place for us to joke around about odd jobs that we may have had. The popular thing to do is talk about the craziest jobs you have

to kind of out do the next persons story. It gets kind of stupid after awhile. I try not to get involved with that pissing contest shit. When my friends outside of work ask me I have no problem telling them stories cause its such a different side of life. Let's face it I see people and life at its worst. More and more I am finding that people that do my job only associate with people that do the same job or something similar (i.e.: police, fire, EMS). I am an outcast of my own design. The people at work don't get me cause I am the kid that talks about punk music and take an interest in what is going on around me. Be that as it may, I am happy not falling into the trap to which they fell. I go home at night and have supportive family and friends, who don't give a damn about who I am at work. They are just happy to see me... and I them.

I am extremely excited at the prospects of me being in the Fire Academy as early as December. I am happy that I play in a band and I have an outlet for some expression. I started playing bass in another band to further that outlet. I am trying to spend more and more time with my girlfriend and my friends. I have new things to worry about and finish. As I write this my best friend Elway's mother is battling cancer. I think about what he is going through and the pain his mother is in. I think about seeing my best friend in the world cry about what his mother is going through and my troubles seem pretty small in comparison. My main concern right now is getting past this test, and supporting my brother Elway and his mother through this fight with cancer. I would gladly step in front of a bullet for Elway, but this time I am helpless. I wish I knew what to say or what to do. All I can do is be a shoulder for him to lean on and be strong for him when he is feeling weak.

"Too much time on my hands, I got you on my mind. I can't easy this pain so easily. When you can't find the words to say it's hard to make it through another day and it just makes me want to cry and throw my hands up to the sky. So understand. Don't waste your time always searching for those wasted years. Face up... make your stand and realize you're living in the golden years." — Iron Maiden

We Love You Elway!!!

"Day in day out... I did it for love" — The Hope Conspiracy

I love this life and I plan to do what I can with it. You are only as old as you feel and hardcore keeps me feeling like I am thirteen years old. Feel alive with high fives and stage dives. I am going to "stay young until I die."

Frank Tselfeldt/115 Elmwood Ave./ Staten Island, NY 10308-2637; pissinrox@aol.com

"LOVE IS STRONGER THEN DEATH...FOR THOSE I LOVE I WILL SACRIFICE" 09-11-01 BOX 55-8087 never forget our 343 brothers. We will not leave you behind.

"I'm not afraid to say I care." — Torches to Rome

I hope that in my next column I will have news on my testing process or maybe even my placement in the academy. Thank you to Leslie and Lisa for being understanding with me as always. Thank you to Morgan, my family and

Morgan's family. They have been my biggest and best support in my dream. I am so excited that just thinking about it makes me smile.

Two great new bands from New York are The Exelar (x-I, Robot, Devola) from upstate NY and Celebrity Murders (x-C.R., Milhouse, Halfman) from NYC. Both bands are fucking awesome people and rip shit up live. Give Up The Ghost (American Nightmare) is my favorite thing in hardcore right now; I have not been able to get enough of this band for the past three years. Tragedy needs to put out more records. The Union of Uranus discography needs to come out. Sleepytime Trio should just reunite and tour constantly. Yaphet Kotto should come stay at my house again and cook breakfast with the family. Murdock needs to record again and get some records out, and I need to SHUT THE FUCK UP. Thank you for all the new people I am meeting through this column and fuck off to all the people that think their shit don't stink.

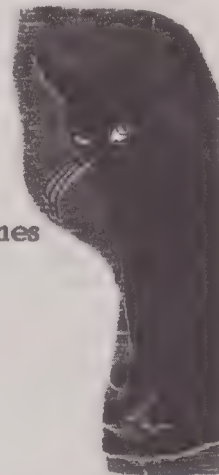
"Prove me wrong. Prove you give a fuck, about the sound, about the words. Prove that we've crossed your mind on some term besides numbers. There's no loyalty. There's no fucking ethics here. It's not the message that keeps you here. Prove me wrong." — Give up the Ghost

Pitching at Inclines

With

Eric

xxx



I've been thinking recently about why I identify with certain things. Even more specifically, why I, or anyone for that matter, would align myself with certain groups rather than others or certain struggles. The old piece of advice regarding choosing battles is certainly appropriate. The thing is, it's kind of like staying in one place.

For instance, I'm from Pennsylvania, USA. Specifically, Pittsburgh. I love this city and I love this state even though it's got a lot to answer for. The death penalty, for one. How, you might ask, can I possibly love a state that endorses such nonsense? I think that the reason exists within the context of my relationship to this place, not the governmental structure. (As a brief aside, the same issue was raised last summer while I was on tour. I mentioned that I wanted to display a small Mexican flag on my amplifier as a sign of solidarity with an amazing and vibrant immigrant culture in the US. One of my bandmates pointed out that that would make him uncomfortable because of the shady dealings of the Mexican government... their persecution of indigenous people, V. Fox is buddy buddy with George W. Bush among other things. That's the kind of

difference that I'm talking about... ideology vs. what others might think at first glance.) At any rate, why, then, the PA pride if there is fiscal turmoil in the city (and state) among other shady dealings? One reason is that I don't mind being part of something I love, even with faults, because I can work to make a positive change. Examples of this range from the peace movement to being straight edge. There are things that I don't like about each, but I feel I am a part of a larger peace movement and I consider myself straight edge. And don't mistake, I'm not talking about crusading around here...it's all about living as an example of what I want to see around me. That's how I look at it.

Part of this hooks into what the genius feminist theorist Helene Cixous talked about in her watershed 1975 writing entitled "The Laugh of the Medusa." In her studies, Cixous discovered that, in the traditional patriarchal binary thought process, the female was always negative and powerless. She was either passive or she didn't exist. There was no positive state for women. What Cixous did was create a space outside of the binary for the female. Part of her ideas included that women were not one or the other but multiple and variable. For Helene Cixous, moving outside of being female wasn't an option. The language and thought processes of the era dictated the binary "either/or" approach. Rather than accepting this, she created a space. She still taught English at university and she still stayed within that situation, but she created a space for what she knew was important and right. This is one of the biggest inspirations to me. To stick around in a situation that isn't in any way ideal, but change what you can and move forward. She is amazing. Check her out.

What else has been doing for me what Helene Cixous does for me? Io's The Willow Snag CD. It got a bunk review in this magazine last time around. Check it out. Cerberus Shoal. This and is so amazing and crazy it's hard to write about. Yes, they are the same folks (some of them) from 9 years ago. They are so genuine and kind and it's amazing. Check them out. The Treeswing House in Northern DC/Univ. of Maryland... they do shows and are amazing sincere sweet people. Same goes for the Pirates Cove in Allentown, PA. I'm also psyched that Hull City in doing so well in the British footy league 3rd Div. GO TIGERS! You'll make it to 2nd Div this time, lads! Also, Viva DC United. They have Thiago Martins (former Pittsburgh Riverhound and A-League MVP and leading league goal scorer). I have to support the Black and Red now! If anyone wants to talk soccer, please get in touch. Also, Lit Theory... talk to me. Being old and punk? Talk to me. I just turned 28. Let's keep it moving.

Yours in acoustic parts and cheat beats,
Eric xxx/PO Box 162/Turtle Creek, PA 15112;
xericx@telerama.com

I'll leave you with this. More Genius from the great state of PA...

"Fate has come/Some time has passed/ Realize—it will never come again/First glances, mine have never changed and yet I wonder/Do yours remain the same? And it is perfect, yet, may not work/But not because of us, and it is this that hurts."

"Fate" by Dutchland Diesel from the Jump The Fence CD.



On October 17, 2003, Jeff and I will mark the third birthday of our son Misha, who died during delivery. Two weeks later, we will celebrate the first birthday of our daughter Natasha. Misha's death was the saddest and hardest thing I've ever gone through in my life. Natasha seems to be an exact opposite in that her presence in my life has been an absolute positive. My love for her overflows daily, and even when life is depressing and hard, as it has been the past year or two, she is a consistent bright spot in the midst of looming global fascism and/or destruction.

I still mourn Misha. But when I consider my life these past three years, from Misha's death, to my amazingly strong partnership, to my wonderful daughter, I still feel blessed and lucky. And of course all of this is a reminder that in the midst of global imperialism and frightening national politics and looming environmental collapse, individual, personal dramas and triumphs continue, and for most people, continue to be central to their lives.

I haven't yet written Natasha's birth story, but hope to soon. What follows is Misha's birth story, written on October 24, 2000, a week after his birth.

October 24, 2000

I went into labor the morning of Tuesday, October 17, 2000. I was up late reading, and then up early with cramps. I felt like I had to poop, but couldn't, quite and I was slightly nauseous. So I made some mint tea and sat at the table, drinking tea, eating saltines, and reading. I finally realized that the cramps were coming in waves so I tried to time them to see if it was contractions. This was around 7:45 am and yes, they were. I got Jeff up and asked him to take a walk with me because we'd been told that false labor would go away if you changed your activity. The contractions kept coming. I could just barely walk through them. They felt like super strong period cramps. We made it around the block and I pretty much knew—I was in labor. I sent Jeff to get a clock with a second hand so we could better time the contractions. He got a stop watch from Garlic. She came down a few minutes later and said she'd dreamt in the night that I'd knocked on her door and said I was in labor. She was tuned in.

I pooped at some point, and in between contractions was trying to kick things into order in my room. We made the bed and Tracy went and bought some plastic to cover it. Then we made it again with the extra sheets. Jeff tried to call Julie, our midwife, and she wasn't home. Garlic timed my contractions for a while, they were about a minute apart. They were strong enough that I had to moan through them. I was mostly leaning across the bed for them. Jeff called Tonya, our other midwife, and she said, well, I'll

hear from you in awhile. We were a little taken aback because it seemed to us like things were moving pretty quickly.

Jeff started a fire, and Garlic put out the call that I was in labor. Or maybe Tracy did that. Jeff started supporting me through contractions—he was sitting on the bed and I would kneel on the floor in front of him and lean across his lap. I was chilly between contractions and sweaty during them.

Tonya and Julie showed up, Melanie came with Julie. They checked my blood pressure, which was fine, and checked the fetal heart tones. It took them awhile, as usual. Harder between contractions. I lay on my side on the bed for a couple of contractions to make it easier for them but the contractions were much harder to take that way.

The cats were around. Sappho for quite a while was camped out in the middle of the bed. Who knows what she made of all this.

The contractions continued to get stronger. Every now and then it would seem like they couldn't get any stronger, but then a while later I'd notice they were. I really had to concentrate on keeping my moans low-pitched. But the noises were so crucial in getting through each contraction. Several times Tonya reminded me to breathe out and let the contraction go at the end of each one. I kept trying to remember to relax my jaw, relax my pelvic muscles. It was hard; my body wanted to climb away from the pelvic area, away from the pain. I kept going to the toilet, peeing a little sometimes. It was easier to relax my pelvic muscles on the toilet.

We went outside for a while at one point. The sun was out; it was a pretty day. Jeff walked with me and when I felt a contraction coming on I'd signal him and he'd get on his knees and I'd lean on his shoulders. The neighbor's dog was barking so we went back inside.

We also tried the tub. It helped dispel my clamminess, and was soothing between contractions, but it was hard to get comfortable during contractions. So I didn't spend a whole lot of time in there.

Julie and Tonya were pretty kickback. They sat around, took notes.

At some point I guess my water broke. I was on the toilet and there was a flow of liquid. Not the gush I'd been expecting, but I had Jeff mention it to Julie.

More and more intense contractions. I found myself shaking between them. Tired. I had been sipping an anti nausea concoction, and drinking water, but couldn't deal with the idea of food. Yuck. I drank some juice to try to boost my blood sugar.

During really hard contractions I'd think: Julie did this. Shannon did this. I can do this. I had to remind myself, you are strong enough to do this.

The contractions were getting really hard. I stayed on the toilet because it was the only position that let me relax a little between contractions. They were getting so strong that the only way I could keep my moans low was to get guttural—must have sounded wild. Like grindcore, Jeff said.

I suspected I was nearing transition because I was having moments where I felt a little desperate. I started to vocalize "my cervix is

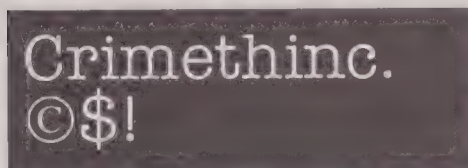
opening, open,” during the contractions, I think it helped with the final dilation. Jeff was right there with me, I think he also chanted “open” with me. I started to talk to the baby a little bit, “Come on baby, I’m ready for you”

Perhaps before I started chanting open I had bloody show—the mucus plug.

I started to feel an urge to push. I wasn’t sure at first. Also around that time I felt some kicking and told Julie. She said, maybe the baby’s trying to help out. She said to go ahead and push and see how it felt. It hurt but was also irresistible. It got stronger and harder. Pushing was intense. Julie said to resist it a little. I would go into the contraction, pant as much as possible and then my body would make me push. I touched my vulva and it was bulging just a little.

Tonya or Julie suggested I try being on my hands and knees on the bed. The pushing was so intense now. Felt like my body couldn’t expand enough. I was feeling Misha’s head move through the birth canal. I was on the bed with a blanket over me and pushed and could feel my vagina stretching, burning. I said, “I think I’m crowning” and, yes, I was.

Julie asked Jeff if he wanted to catch and he moved around behind me. Contraction, push, oh it burned and it hurt but I felt his head move out of me. Another contraction, push, his shoulders which hurt as much as the head, to my surprise. Then his body came out fast. Jeff said, “It’s a boy!” I turned around wanting him, wanting to hold him. They were rubbing him with towels but he was lifeless. Jeff and I started talking to him, calling him. Julie sent Melanie to call 911 and Tonya and Julie started doing CPR and breathing. Mel was behind me crying. Nothing happened with Misha. I looked at him and he looked so beautiful to me. A big beautiful boy but I think even before the paramedics arrived I knew there was no life in him.



Hey there, fellow *HeartattaCk* readers! This issue, the topic of this column is security culture, for all of you punk rockers out there acting in accordance with your consciences and occasionally breaking laws in the process. First, though, I have to throw out a shameless plug for my friends in the band Zegota, who have weathered a storm of logistical challenges over the past couple years and are finally going to play some shows in the United States again. These are the dates: December 27 in NYC; December 28 in Providence, RI; December 29 in Boston, MA; December 30 in Philadelphia, PA; December 31 in Washington, DC; January 1 in Richmond, VA; and January 2 in Carrboro, NC.

Now on to our regularly scheduled deprogramming. What is security culture, you ask?

A security culture is a set of customs shared by a community whose members may engage in illegal activities, the practice of which minimizes the risks of such activities.

Having a security culture in place saves everyone the trouble of having to work out safety

measures over and over from scratch, and can help offset paranoia and panic in stressful situations—hell, it might keep you out of prison, too. The difference between protocol and culture is that culture becomes unconscious, instinctive, and thus effortless; once the safest possible behavior has become habitual for everyone in the circles you travel in, you can spend less time and energy emphasizing the need for it, or suffering the consequences of not having it, or worrying about how much danger you’re in—as you’ll know you’re already doing everything you can to be careful. If you’re in the habit of not giving away anything sensitive about yourself, you can collaborate with strangers without having to agonize about whether or not they are informers; if everyone knows what not to talk about over the telephone, your enemies can tap the line all they want and it won’t get them anywhere.

The central principle of all security culture, the point that cannot be emphasized enough, is that people should never be privy to any sensitive information they do not need to know.

The greater the number of people who know something that can put individuals or projects at risk—whether that something be the identity of a person who committed an illegal act, the location of a private meeting, or a plan for future activity—the more chance there is of the knowledge getting into the wrong hands. Sharing such information with people who do not need it does them a disservice as well as the ones at risk: it puts them in the uncomfortable situation of being able to mess up other people’s lives with a single misstep. If they are interrogated they will have something to hide rather than being able to honestly claim ignorance.

Don’t ask, don’t tell.

Don’t ask others to share any confidential information you don’t absolutely need to know. Don’t brag about illegal things you or others have done, or mention things that are going to happen or might happen, or even refer to another person’s interest in being involved in such activities. Stay aware whenever you speak, don’t let chance allusions drop out thoughtlessly.

You can say no at any time to anyone about anything.

Don’t answer any questions you don’t want to—not just with police officers, but also with other activists and even close friends: if there’s something you don’t feel safe sharing, don’t. This also means being comfortable with others doing the same with you: if there’s a conversation they want to keep to themselves, or they ask you not to be part of a meeting or project, you shouldn’t take this personally—it’s for everyone’s good that they’re free to do so. For that matter, don’t participate in any projects you don’t feel good about, or collaborate with anyone you feel ill at ease with, or ignore your gut feeling in any situation; if something goes wrong and you get into trouble, you don’t want to have any regrets. You’re responsible for not letting anyone (not even yourself!) talk you into taking risks you’re not ready for.

Don’t ever turn your friends over to your enemies.

If captured, never, ever give up any information that could endanger anyone else. Some recommend an explicit oath be sworn by

all participants in a direct action group: that way, in a worst case scenario, when pressure might make it hard to distinguish between giving up a few harmless details and totally selling out, everyone will know exactly what commitments they made to each other.

Don’t make it too easy for your enemies to figure out what you’re up to.

Don’t be too predictable in the methods you employ, or the targets you choose, or the times and places you meet to discuss things. Don’t be too visible in the public aspects of the struggle in which you do your most serious direct action: keep your name off mailing lists and out of the media, perhaps avoid association with above-ground organizations and campaigns entirely. If you’re involved in really serious clandestine activities with a few comrades, you may want to limit your interactions in public, if not avoid each other altogether.

Don’t throw any direct action ideas around in public that you think you might want to try at some point.

Wait to propose an idea until you can gather a group of individuals who you expect will all be interested in trying it; the exception is the bosom companion with whom you brainstorm and hash out details in advance—safely outside your home and away from mixed company, of course. Don’t propose your idea until you think the time is right for it to be tried, to minimize the length of the vulnerable period during which the idea is out there without being put into action. Invite only those you are pretty certain will want to join in—everyone you invite who doesn’t end up participating is a needless security risk, and this can be doubly problematic if it turns out they feel your proposed activity is laughably dumb or morally wrong. Only invite people who can keep secrets—this is critical whether or not they decide to participate.

Develop a private shorthand for communicating with your comrades in public spaces.

It’s important work out a way to communicate surreptitiously with your trusted friends about security issues and comfort levels while in public situations, such as at a meeting called to discuss possible direct action. Knowing how to gauge each other’s feelings without others being able to tell that you are sending messages back and forth will save you the headache of trying to guess each other’s thoughts about a situation or individual, and help you avoid acting strangely when you can’t take your friend aside in the middle of things to compare notes. By the time you have convened a larger group to propose an action plan, you and your friends should be clear on what each other’s intentions, willingness to run risks, and levels of commitment are, to save time and avoid unnecessary ambiguity. If you haven’t been part of a direct action planning circle before, you’ll be surprised how complicated and convoluted they can get even when everyone *does* arrive prepared.

Develop methods to establish the security level of a group or situation.

One quick procedure you can run at the beginning of a larger meeting at which not everyone is acquainted is the “vouched for” game: everyone places a hand on someone else they feel they can swear by as reliable and trustworthy.

Hopefully, everyone is connected to each other by some link in the chain; either way, at least everyone knows how things stand. An activist who understands the importance of good security will not feel insulted in such a situation if there is no one present who can vouch for him and the others ask him to leave.

Be aware of the reliability of those around you, especially those you might collaborate with in underground activities.

Be conscious of how long you've known people, how far back their involvement in the community and their lives outside of it can be traced, and what others' experiences with them have been. The friends you grew up with, if you still have any of them in your life, are the best possible companions for direct action, as you are familiar with their strengths and weaknesses and the ways they handle pressure—and you know for a fact they are who they say they are. Make sure only to trust your safety and the safety of your projects to levelheaded folks who share the same priorities and commitments and have nothing to prove.

Don't get too distracted worrying about whether people are infiltrators or not; if your security measures are effective, it shouldn't even matter.

Don't waste your energy and make yourself paranoid and unsociable suspecting everybody you meet. If you keep all sensitive information inside the circle of people it concerns, only collaborate with reliable and experienced friends whose history you can verify, and never give away anything about your private activities, agents and police informers will be powerless to gather evidence to use against you. A good security culture should make it practically irrelevant whether these vermin are active in your community or not. The important thing is not whether or not a person is involved with the cops, but whether or not he constitutes a security risk; if he is deemed insecure (double meaning intended here), he should never be permitted to end up in a situation where anyone's safety depends on him.

Learn and abide by the security expectations of each person you interact with, and respect differences in style.

To collaborate with others, you have to make sure they feel at home with you; even if you're not collaborating with them, you don't want to make them uncomfortable or disregard a danger they understand better than you. When it comes to planning direct action, not abiding by the security culture accepted in a given community can blow not only your chances to cooperate with others on a project, but the possibility of the project happening at all—for example, if you bring up an idea others were planning to try in a setting they deem insecure, they may be forced to abandon the plan as it may now be associated with them. Ask people to outline for you their specific security needs before you even broach the subject of direct action.

Let others know exactly what your needs are when it comes to security.

The corollary of abiding by others' expectations is that you must make it easy for others to abide by yours. At the beginning of any relationship in which your private political life may become an issue, emphasize that there are details of your activities that you need to keep to

yourself. This can save you a lot of drama in situations that are already stressful enough; the last thing you need on returning from a secret mission gone awry is to end up in a fight with your lover: "But if you trusted me, you would tell me about this! How do I know you're not...!" It's not a matter of trust—sensitive information isn't a reward you can earn or deserve.

Look out for other people.

Make explicit to those around you what risks you may pose to them with your presence¹ or with actions you have planned. Let them know to the extent you're able what risks you run yourself: for example, whether you can afford to be arrested (if there are outstanding warrants for you, if you are an illegal alien, etc.), what responsibilities you have to be free to maintain, whether you have any allergies. Don't endanger others with your decisions, especially if you're not able to provide concrete support should they somehow get arrested and charged on account of your behavior.

Security culture is a form of etiquette, a way to avoid needless misunderstandings and potentially disastrous conflicts.

Security concerns should never be an excuse for making others feel left out or inferior—though it can take some finesse to avoid that!—just as no one should feel they have a "right" to be in on anything others prefer to keep to themselves. Those who violate the security culture of their communities should not be rebuked too harshly the first time—this isn't a question of being hip enough to activist decorum to join the in-group, but of establishing group expectations and gently helping people understand their importance; besides, a person is least able to absorb constructive criticism when they're put on the defensive. However, such people should always be told immediately how they're putting others at risk, and what the consequences will be should they continue to. Those who can't grasp this must be tactfully but effectively shut out of all sensitive situations.

Security culture is not paranoia institutionalized, it is a way to avoid unhealthy paranoia by minimizing risks ahead of time.

It is counterproductive to spend more energy worrying about how much surveillance you are under than is useful for decreasing the danger it poses, just as it is debilitating to be constantly second-guessing your precautions and doubting the authenticity of potential comrades. A good security culture should make everyone feel more relaxed and confident, not less. At the same time, it's equally unproductive to accuse those who adhere to security measures stricter than yours of being paranoid—remember, our enemies are out to get us.

Security culture involves a code of silence, but it is not a code of voicelessness.

The stories of our daring exploits in the struggle against capitalism must be told somehow, so everyone will know resistance is a real possibility put into action by real people; open incitements to insurrection must be made, so would-be revolutionaries can find each other and the revolutionary sentiments buried in the hearts of the masses find their way to the surface. A good security culture should preserve as much secrecy as is necessary for individuals to be safe in their underground activities, while still

providing for as much visibility for radical perspectives as possible. Most of the security tradition extant in the activist milieu today is derived from the past twenty years of animal rights and earth liberation activities; as such, it's perfectly suited for the needs of small groups carrying out isolated quasi-terrorist acts, but isn't always appropriate for more above-ground campaigns aimed at encouraging generalized insubordination/insurrection. In some cases it can make sense to break the law openly, in order to provoke the participation of a large mass which can then provide safety in numbers.

You should always balance the need to escape detection by your enemies against the need to be accessible to potential friends.

In the long run, secrecy alone cannot protect us—sooner or later they are going to find all of us, and if no one else understands what we're doing and what we want, they'll be able to liquidate us with impunity. Only the power of an informed and sympathetic (and hopefully similarly equipped) public can help us then. There should always be entryways into communities in which direct action is practiced, so more and more people can join in. Those doing really serious stuff should keep it to themselves, of course, but every community should also have a person or two who vocally advocates and educates about direct action, and who can discreetly help novices link up with others getting started.

When you're planning an action, you should begin by establishing the security level appropriate to it, and act accordingly from there on.

Learning to gauge the risks posed by an activity or situation and how to deal with them appropriately is not just a crucial part of staying out of jail; it also helps to know what you're *not* worried about, so you don't waste energy on unwarranted, cumbersome security measures. Keep in mind that a given action may have different aspects that demand different degrees of security; make sure to keep these distinct. Here's an example of a possible rating system for security levels:

1. Only those who are directly involved in the action know of its existence.
2. Trusted support persons also know about the action, but everyone in the group decides together who these will be.
3. It is acceptable for the group to invite people to participate who might choose not to—that is, some outside the group may know about the action, but are still expected to keep it a secret.
4. The group does not set a strict list of who is invited; participants are free to invite others and encourage them to do the same, while emphasizing that knowledge of the action is to be kept within the circles of those who can be trusted with secrets.
5. "Rumors" of the action can be spread far and wide through the community, but the identities of those at the center of the organizing are to be kept a secret.
6. The action is announced openly, but with at least some degree of discretion, so as not to tip off the sleeper of the authorities.
7. The action is totally announced and aboveground in all ways.

To give examples, security level #1 would be appropriate for a group planning to

firebomb a SUV dealership, while level #2 would be acceptable for those planning more minor acts of property destruction, such as spray painting. Level #3 or #4 would be appropriate for calling a spokescouncil preceding a black bloc at a large demonstration or for a group planning to do a newspaper wrap, depending on the ratio of risk versus need for numbers. Level #5 would be perfect for a project such as hijacking a rock show: everyone hears in advance that the Ani DiFranco performance is going to end in a "spontaneous" anti-war march so people can prepare accordingly, but no one knows whose idea it is, so no one can be targeted as an organizer. Level #6 would be appropriate for announcing a critical mass bicycle ride: fliers are wrapped around the handlebars of every civilian bicycle, but no announcements are sent to the papers, so the cops won't be there at the beginning while the mass is still vulnerable. Level #7 is appropriate for a permitted antiwar march or independent media video screening, unless you're so dysfunctionally paranoid you even want to keep community outreach projects a secret.

It also makes sense to choose the means of communication you will use according to the level of security demanded. Here's an example of different levels of communications security, corresponding to the system just outlined above:

1. No communication about the action except in person, outside the homes of those involved, in surveillance-free environments (e.g. the group goes camping to discuss plans); no discussion of the action except when it is absolutely necessary.

2. Outside group meetings, involved individuals are free to discuss the action in surveillance-free spaces.

3. Discussions are permitted in homes not under certain surveillance.

4. Communication by encrypted email or on neutral telephone lines is acceptable.

5. People can speak about the action over telephones, e-mail, etc. provided they're careful not to give away certain details.

6. Telephones, e-mail, etc. are all fair game; e-mail list-serves, fliering in public spaces, announcements to newspapers, etc. may or may not be acceptable, on a case by case basis.

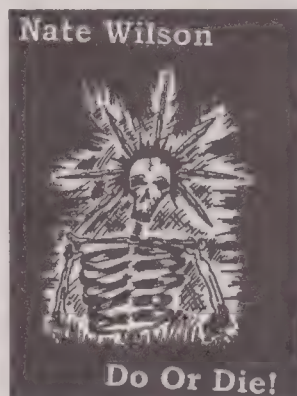
7. Communication and proclamation by every possible medium is encouraged.

If you keep hazardous information out of circulation and you follow suitable security measures in every project you undertake, you'll be well on your way to carrying out what early CrimethInc agent Abbie Hoffman described as the first duty of the revolutionary: not getting caught. Believe it or not, there are people well into the prime of life who have fought all their lives in the war against capitalism and never been arrested. All the best in your adventures and misadventures, and remember—you didn't hear it from us!

For more proscribed information, free propaganda, or a catalog of punk rock recordings, contact the CrimethInc Department of Homeland Insecurity at PO Box 2133/Greensboro, NC 27402/USA; www.crimethinc.com

¹ A hilarious example of why this is important occurred when CrimethInc agents Paul F. Maul and Nick F. Adams attempted to return to the continental United States after a period spent hiding out in Alaska. They were worried about

how the Canadian customs agents would feel about the massive quantities of assault rifle bullets they had with them, so they removed the panels on the doors of their car and secreted the bullets behind these. On the way to the border they picked up a hitchhiker, a nondescript, clean-cut fellow who seemed harmless. At the border check, both CrimethInc workers held their breath as the customs agent ran their I.D.s, but were relieved to receive them back without incident. They thought they were going to pass through the border without a hitch until the customs agent ran the hitchhiker's I.D.; suddenly armed officers surrounded their car and ordered them out at gunpoint. The hitchhiker, it turned out, was a long-time Greenpeace activist who had arrests in thirty countries! The officers strip-searched their car, at last removing the door panels, and the bullets clattered out onto the pavement. Our heroes spent the following four hours locked in interrogation rooms, Canadian policemen screaming "Where are the guns? We know you have them—tell us where they are!" and paying little heed to their protestations: "This is all a big misunderstanding—we don't have any guns. We're graphic designers—we have the bullets for a design project. Honest, officer!"



Artie Philie is fronting a new hardcore band called Celebrity Murderers. I'd say it's in the vein of old Born Against. They have a demo out. Kamikaze have self released an LP that smokes and is similar in sound to past bands the boys have played in. Pick it up if you were at all into Down In Flames. Matt Average has a new band going. I'm excited to hear it, as I was a huge fan of Reagan SS. He's teamed up with the infamous James Ross, Thrashead, and believe it or not the guitarist from Crucifix. They are still without a name. Don Austin have also self released a record. It's a 7" that is as pissed and angry as any of their past efforts. Pick the shit up, Larry's an oldie who deserves some respect. Sick And Tired are from Western Mass and play some really killer hardcore. The same sorta stuff we've all come to expect from this East Coast Mecca. Wreckage is a new band from NYC. I recently got their demo at show. It really sounds pretty old, and shocked me at how awesome it is. The layout looks great also. Solid drums, with vox that stuck out to me. Albany has slew of new bands, one being Outta Hand who sound like a fucked up mixture of Minor Threat music with Darby Crash vocals. The demo is done on a four track, and works well. Hoods Up are also new to the Albany Area and play more posi youth sounding stuff. Kinda in the vein of GB maybe. Down To Kill play some

strange sounding fast hardcore/punk from Portland, ME. Has kind of a '80s California feel going for it, with some slower breakdowns. Runnamucks are currently I think the best in the fast hardcore/punk vein. These guys go unnoticed by many, I guess because they don't get hyped (thankfully). They are from Florida, but play a frenzied style of Boston hardcore. Sounds to me like Jerry's Kids meets The Freeze. I'll be traveling to Holland once again in October. To finish things up with The Oath. We will be touring there as well as writing and then recording a full length LP in Chicago.

So recently I'm spending a lot of time in NYC visiting and hanging out with my girlfriend, and doing odd jobs, etc. One morning I'm waiting in line at Grand Central station to buy a ticket to get out to a job I'm doing for friend Pat West, who has just bought a house on the out skirts of the big apple. I'm loosing my patience with this senior citizen ahead of me who has been tying to use his ATM card at the window for tickets for more then a few minutes. I'm growing anxious, as I'm afraid I'll miss my train. I watch him struggle like ten times to try to get the card to work. He sticks it on, under, upside down, sideways, everything but swiping the fucking thing through the machine. I finally decide to be of some service to myself and the rest of Grand Central station. I say, "Excuse me sir, like this." I then take the card out of his hand and swipe it through for him, thus enabling him to purchase his ticket and get the line moving. He's pretty stunned, but is thankful and bids me a good day. I then hear a deep voice from behind me. "How would you like to join me in a movement?" I turn around like ...huh? There is this creepy looking tall dude who sort of resembles the "tall man" from the *Phantasm* movies. The man is very well dressed wearing a 3-piece suit and carrying a briefcase. I'm like really confused and say, "What?" The tall man then says to me very normal like, but still somewhat loud: "How would you like to join me in a movement to give women, niggers, faggots, and old people their own lines?" I was like sssshesssus, holy fucking hell! I was shocked and there were tons of people behind us, beside us, people every where. I think what really baffled me most about it was the way he was dressed. I'd seen and heard things like this many times before, but mostly from rednecks and uneducated people who might not look like the "higher class" part of our society. How he appeared to me didn't fit what came out of his mouth. The fact that he let those words slip out of his mouth to a perfect stranger, now that was fucked up. Saying shit like that to someone that might be married to a black girl, or even might be a flaming homosexual. He didn't know me; he didn't know my beliefs, why would he say that to me? It all happened so fast that the only reaction I really had was maybe a puzzled look on my face. When I finally got on the train I was still thinking about it, and did so for a while until the tall man entered the car ahead of me. I could see him sit down, take off his jacket and begin reading the paper. I thought about saying something to him, or walking by and spilling something on him, but I've realized long ago that doesn't usually remedy things. At any rate, the next day I'm sitting on the same train waiting for it to leave and who sits down across from me but the tall man. I'm like

thinking really weird thoughts now. I mean this is fucking NYC, why is he on the same train, the same car, and what about me is attracting this freak to be anywhere near me. He goes through his same routine (taking off the jacket and reading the paper). I'm staring at him trying to figure this fuckwad out. The train then starts filling up with commuters, and it just so happens that two elderly black women say excuse me and sit down next to him. I can tell he's razzled a bit. Then the one woman starts singing like a gospel sort of song. The tall man sorta flicks his paper to make an annoying sound with it, and turns to me like maybe I'll understand or something. Like maybe I'm annoyed also. He's looking at me and I say: "What are you gonna start a movement?" He looks away from me and opens his paper back up. I was in heaven sitting there for forty minutes watching him squirm in his seat. That lady sang on and off for what must seemed like forever to the tall man. Fucking New York.

Nate Wilson/PO Box 14253/Albany, NY 12212; cryptocomx@aol.com

Guest: Candace Moors

We are at War.

Tear it all down,

These tears beg

For a system that doesn't

Produce the mass arrests

Of social justice seekers

When questioning

The viability of neo-liberal

Trade policies:

GATT, FTAA, WTO, World Bank,

WEF, World Agricultural Forum...

Pepper spray, jail time,

The forced signing of rights' waivers

Are the price

Of dissent

To side with workers

Internationally.

Economic liberals

And corporate citizens

Own us. Our lives.

Where is the Canadian Labour Congress

On this matter?

Write: 23 Veteran's Dr./Fredericton,

NB/E3A 4C4/Canada



I AM THE LAW

Scott Torguson

The last few weeks in Hawaii were just as great as the first. I'm pretty happy I ended up on Kauai as opposed to another island. Honolulu was an American big city, not completely different from

other American big cities. Kauai, on the other hand, had no big cities, just some little towns along the coast and lots of land for hiking. I saved my pennies and took a four-day trip to the Big Island as well. (Honolulu, by the way, is on the island of Oahu—the major cities on the Big Island are Kona and Hilo.)

The Big Island has some of the craziest shit I've ever seen. If you get a chance to go you should because there are some things there that you just can't see anywhere else. The first day I just went and did a hike through a rain-forest-like area to the back of a valley. Unluckily, as was the case with some of the hikes I did on Kauai, the weather didn't cooperate; so when I got to the top it was foggy and I couldn't see a thing. Even without the view the hike was worth it. I also went to the north coast where there was a beautiful black sand beach. It was around this time that I started to notice that my right knee would hurt pretty bad when I would hike downhill. I talked my dad later and he told me not to worry about it; the same thing happened to him around the time he was my age and the doctor told him it was just arthritis. Good to know. The receding hairline isn't quite enough of a reminder of aging for me. This should do nicely.

Anyway, the next day is when the fun really started. I headed south from where I was staying in Kona. My first stop was Southpoint. True to its name, it's the southern most point in the United States. There are cliffs down there at the bottom of the island overlooking the bluest water I had ever seen in my life. There was also a current that went directly out to sea that looked like it was moving insanely fast. There were also some twelve year-old locals jumping off the cliffs. I guess there was about 10 feet of still water before the current really started which left them a little bit of room to swim back to shore before being pulled out into the open ocean. These were some cliffs I chose not to jump off from.

From there I headed around to where the current active volcano was located. For the last 100 years or so, this has been where the island is being created. First I headed to the big crater which was three or four miles across. Inside this was a smaller and deeper crater that was, at one point, a boiling cauldron of lava. That would have been even cooler to see. But I could still see where different flows had overridden the landscape at different times in the last 50 years. The coolest hike I did was one that went halfway around a smaller crater, then down and right through the middle of the crater. I was the only one walking through it. It was just crazy. There was steam coming up at various places, and the whole thing was like some surreal warped asphalt playground. It was just so unlike anything I had ever seen. But it got better. As it was getting dark, I went down to where the lava was actually flowing. After parking the car, I walked through newly formed lava for about two miles right up to where the lava was flowing. I was just standing there close enough to touch it with my mouth wide open in amazement. There it was, the earth being born. All of the sudden the lava would break out somewhere else, and then stop. I just stood there for hours and watched. If you ever get a chance to go make sure you do.

Anything after that would be a disappointment, but the next day I took the rental

car up to the top of a 13,000+ foot mountain, one of two on the island. The landscape up there looked like pictures from Mars. There were these strange looking craters, and on a clear day you can see other islands. It was cloudy of course when I was there. It snows up there in the wintertime. I heard some Hawaiians would go fill up there trucks with snow then drive down to the beach, about an hour and a half away, and sit in the back of the truck in the snow at the beach where it is 90 degrees out.

I did do some work while I was there, too. The highlight was getting to cross-examine a doctor at an administrative hearing. It still seems strange though being in this position, but it was fun. Everyone in the office was cool. It was sad to leave. As much as I missed everyone on the mainland, Kauai was an amazing place to spend 10 weeks. If nothing else, going to law school allowed me to do this so it was worth it.

I'm now back at school and back to the grind. The good news is (1) this is my last year; and (2) I am doing a clinic this semester, which eats up most of my credits. Yes, by this time next year (assuming I pass the bar) I will be a real attorney. Go figure. The clinic is cool. Basically, there is a law office in the basement of the law school building. The clinic that I am doing is the Civil Practice Clinic. This clinic consists of basically helping people with their legal issues who can't otherwise afford an attorney. In other words, it is pretty similar to what I did over the summer. Right now I have three clients. One claims that he was fired from his job because he is black, one who wants her deposit back that she put down on a house after an insurance company found water damage and wouldn't insure it, and one whose baby's daddy has just filed for custody after having no contact with the kid since the kid was born. Should be a fun semester, although the other classes, Law and Economics of Work and Family, and Church and State are not quite as much fun.

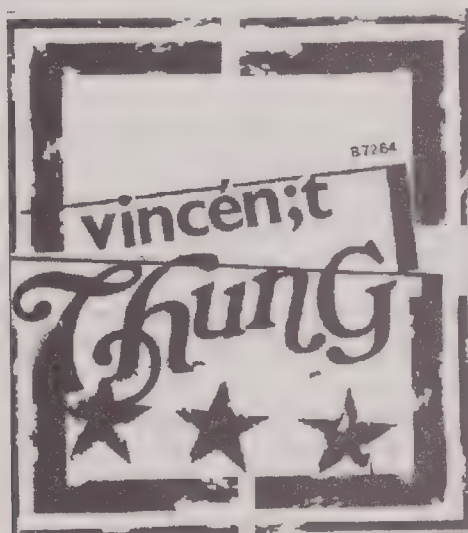
There is a big controversy right now at the law school that I think is pretty interesting. The law school has a non-discrimination policy when it comes to employers recruiting on the law school campus. If you want to come interview, you have to have the interviews open for everyone. In fact, the school has no class rank and will not allow employers to pre-screen students on the basis of transcripts. Most employers have no problem with this policy, with one obvious exception. Any guesses? Well, it's the military of course. If you are gay the military does not want to talk to you. Most of you are probably thinking, "fuck the military, why would anyone want to work there anyway." I wouldn't, but the legal branches of the service academies (JAG, like the TV show) are not exactly the same as frontline military service. In fact, there is a good chance you'll end up defending someone who is being discharged for being gay. So I can see why people would be interested in the job.

The way that the military recruiting process has worked for the last few years is that students were informed when the interviews would happen at another part of campus not on the law school. The military was not allowed to use the law school facilities. So, last year the government told the law school that if the

recruiters were not allowed to use the law school facilities and resources, the entire university (not just the law school) would lose all of its government funding. This figure is somewhere around \$500 million, I think. I am at a private university, but most of this money is student loans. In other words, the majority of the student body would have to leave. Losing this money is simply not an option for the school.

There are two things being done right now to fight this. First, on a more direct level, people are signing up for the interview slots, making the recruiter go through the whole interview, and then either telling the recruiter that (s)he (the student) is gay, or that (s)he would like the job, but is not interested because the military discriminates. Other things that may happen include putting up rainbow flags around the room the interview are being conducted in and just generally harassing the interviewer. Second, the school has filed a lawsuit against the government in the last couple days. I don't have too much info at this point about that, but we'll see what happens with it. Ahh, you gotta love the military.

If anyone books show on the East Coast my band would like to play them. E-mail me. Everyone else is free to e-mail me as well. scott@tothemean.com.



Noise-pop rockers Deerhoof are on stage, herking and jerking through a set at Chicago's The Empty Bottle. The indie rock scene is out in full force, and the place is charged with energy—but I'm not feeling it. During a lull in the chaotic drum blasting permeated by the cute Japanese vocals, I step out of the club into the fresh summer air and take a deep breath.

I really hope that Chicago follows the cue from the other major cities and bans smoking indoors. I mean, even the smog-ridden Western Ave. car exhaust tastes better than a couple hundred hipsters' gullibility.

I like Deerhoof, I really do. But I'm not quite sure why I stepped out after a handful of songs, especially since their set was much better than the LA show I saw months ago. This time, I could actually see the stage. Was I drunk? Not at all. Was I tired? Quite possibly. The responsibility of my 9 to 5 was beckoning.

I walked home, freshened up, and then climbed into bed. Usually content with lulling

myself with happy thoughts of a Bush Free America, eating ice cream, or the last time I got my dick wet, I was instead woefully distracted. At one in the morning, life felt urgent and filled with void. I lay there with my heart thumping and my mind blankly racing like Cinderella freaking the fuck out over her magical glass slipper.

I got up and checked my bladder. As I stood over the toilet shooting blanks like a liquor store in Boston on a Sunday, I got a peculiar notion to refinish the tub—which is what *everyone* should do in the middle of the night.

I started stripping off the molding with a razor and cleaning it with all sorts of hazardous solvents. I bleached the tub until it was a pearly white, scrubbed the grime off the tiles on the wall, then recaulked that fucker.

My mind wandered in the Zen-like motions of mundane cleaning, quickly cruising over my endless To Do List. Let's see, pay the gas bill, return pants to Nordstrom's after wearing them to that potluck (shh!), hang those photos I just framed, buy more silkscreening ink, mail those LPs to Brian, wish ill will upon my mortal enemies, and call Bill Murray's agent for the tenth time about that script I'm working on. Oh yeah, add, "Buy sympathy cards" on there, too. *Cards*. Ugh. At least I know of this really incredible boutique in which to get them (Paper Doll at 1747 W. Division St.).

I'm not a stranger to death. I spent a good part of my childhood zigzagging from funeral to funeral when dozens of relatives were killed in car accidents, murdered by schizophrenics in their cars, or died naturally (in a car). One of my best friends from grade school died from cancer when I was 12. I lost a couple of friends in high school to drugs or gang violence. Then in college, there were the suicides and all those senseless drunk-driving accidents. Hell, in my first week of my freshman year, someone jumped off the 12th story of my dorm as I was coming home from class. I stared at the body pieces as I was unlocking my door and that was gnarly as fuck.

As a lil' tyke, death was just when someone I hardly knew passed away and I'd have to hang out with my cousins for awhile. It wasn't always bad, since it was nice to have someone to link up my Gameboy with while everyone else stared at the dead body in the casket. Wearing the ties was the worst part out of the whole experience.

When people I knew started dying, it was tragic. These deaths were an anomaly, lives taken while I had little grasp or understanding on *why* they died. Sure, the autopsy said this, the police report said that, but that doesn't explain that feeling of a sudden void inside.

It didn't really start until Fred Rogers died. Celebrity deaths normally hit me like any other news I read in *People* magazine—conversation fodder for me to share with my other contemptuous and jaded friends, but Mister Rogers was different. Like many of you readers, I *grew up* with him. When I woke up the news on NPR, I couldn't believe it. Was he even that old? Then I realized that he was.

I'm in my mid-20s now. Fuck what people say about turning into an adult in your early 20s. I couldn't comprehend death in college, and

shut it out with the rest of the problems I wasn't emotionally ready to deal with (commitment in relationships? Hah!). Now, all around me, lots of folks are getting married, kids are being born, and people are dying. Lots of our heroes and peers in music seem to be catching the bug as well.

Johnny Cash was certainly expected, but came so suddenly after his awards recognition at the MTV Video Music Awards that it just hit like a madball to the head. I mean, who saw that video for NIN's "Hurt" and didn't well up in tears? The man lived a life of hard knocks and astounding triumphs and it's very weird to me to be able to consciously witness the end of what will be a timeless legacy.

I don't know how far Wesley Willis' death resonated in your area, but at least there was a NPR obituary on him. I had to wake up to that one, too. In Chicago, the passing of the former Grant Park homeless artist was the talk of the town. While commuting to work on the train, some random kid took notice of my pins and said, "Hey, you hear about Wesley Willis?" Say what you will about punk rock kids and their exploitation of this eccentric, but the bottom line is that the guy died doing what he dreamed and to him, that's all that matters, right?

The Exploding Hearts' van accident took the life out of a band that had so much more to give. Whoever is immortal in charge smothered the wick before their bomb blew. When I heard the news, I hadn't heard the record so I found some mp3s and, well, shit, punk just lost the closest thing we've had to The Buzzcocks. When you're checking out a new band for the first time, there's nothing worse than to think that what you're hearing is all you're going to get. Especially when what you're getting is so good. Check out explodinghearts.com

The only one I had a personal attachment to was Ten Grand frontman Matt Davis. I had only met him once when they played under their previous name, The Vida Blue, and even then, we didn't really correspond much. Our contact was limited to e-mail, when he would write me a short letter to my every time one of these columns got published. It was always about the positive vibe with him. If you check out tengrand.com, all you'll see is a memorial with statements from fans. I thought it was awesomely unusual that someone felt the need to drop me a line each time after reading one of my columns, but after seeing all the things people wrote, these kinds of actions were what embodied his existence.

The thing with these folks is that they touched people in a lasting kind of way. They didn't waste any time chasing their dreams and then sharing it with the ones around them—and their scope had influence.

Three hours later, I stood over the results of my small impulsive project, the sun was starting to leak in through the bathroom window. As morning set in and slumber took over, I realized why I took on such a mundane task. It was the only thing I could do to feel busy and productive. Recaulking the tub isn't going to affect anyone except maybe my roommate, but it was better than sitting on my ass and counting my records. How does that Jawbreaker line go? "I can't sleep to save my life/The day is done/but I don't think I got it right." If I got anything out

of all this, it's that my natural mortality is becoming more of a reality and that's fucking scary realization to have. Hopefully I'll live out all those years dealt to me, but I gotta make sure they count for something.

- Vincent; vincent@oscillat.com

A recent tragedy in our subcultural scene: The Solar Haus, a DIY space in Blacksburg, VA was hosting a Death By Stereo show where a wall of death pushed several kids out of a third floor window. At the time of this writing, one has died and one is in critical condition. Let's hope this doesn't blow up to another Great White kind of ordeal, for it'll be the end of house shows, but a little heightened awareness at these spaces always helps. We're not supposed to be professionals at this by any means, but we do what we can.

Endorsements:

+ On the topic of Matt Davis, the film *Afropunk* by James Spooner is making its rounds around the country. Subtitled "The Rock n Roll Nigger Experience," the documentary follows the lives of four black punk rockers, one of them being the late Matt Davis. Some reasons for seeing it: 1) old footage of the Bad Brains; 2) Ralph from Franklin seems like the sweetest person to chill with; 3) Forbes Graham and his Goreguts T-shirt. I might go into the deeper thoughts of this film in a future column. If you get a chance to see it, GO, especially if you're a punk of color. Or bring it to your town at afropunk.com.

+ In the Wake of the Plague sent me their demo. Hailing from San Francisco, this four piece plays some gloomy Scandinavian hardcore with heavy crust sound. Imagine a faster metal version of Amebix topped with a tight aesthetic. I haven't heard the 7" on Hardcore Holocaust, but I'm sure it continues their doom.

+ I'm really liking the new Tyrades LP out on Broken Rekkids. They've lost their herky jerky punk stylings for a more straightforward garage thrust. Jenna's vocals are hyper-eccentric and carry the same personable charisma of Poly Styrene.

+ I somehow got on Jade Tree's mailing list. While they don't need the plugs from HaC, they're putting out some pretty decent records these days. Paint It Black's *CVA*, From Ashes Rise *Nightmares*, and Strike Anywhere's *Exit English* haven't disappointed yet.

Matt Average

In a recent e-mail exchange someone that found out I was from Oklahoma asked me about seeing N.O.T.A. My response is every band I see and hear I measure against N.O.T.A. When I worked at Epicenter I one time wrote for the description of their "Moscow" EP that was on the collector wall "the definition of hardcore." So they may not be Black Flag, Mob 47, Negative Approach, or any of the better-known classic bands. But I still think they are one of the best ever. They seamlessly blended Oi! with punk and thrash. It was catchy as hell while being raging and pissed off at the same time. "Frustration," "Down On The Pavement," "Fucked Up," and "Moscow"—

all great songs. Intense and urgent, yet there were tuneful elements that worked its way into your psyche for life.

Had they come from California or New York I'm sure others would put them on the same level as the heavyweights. Oklahoma had a ton of great bands there for a while in the early to mid '80s. Along with N.O.T.A. there was True Godzilla, Brown 25, Death Puppy, 151 Black Bats, Face First, and No Direction. Some never even recorded a demo. Face First was the only Okie hardcore band from the eighties besides N.O.T.A. to have a record come out and tour. Brown 25 recorded a couple demos that were absolutely amazing. Same with No Direction. These were bands that should have been pressed onto vinyl. But at the time it wasn't as cheap as it is now, and in places like Oklahoma even tougher to find someone who could actually record your band and get the right sound.

One just has to listen to the Face First EP (released on PYA Records) to hear what I mean. A good live band, but the recording was flat and lacked spark. Someone in the early to mid '90s re-released half of the Face First EP, as well as part of the Death Puppy demo tape on vinyl. Makes me wonder if this person was in both bands. Why else would anyone re-release this stuff? When N.O.T.A. toured California we thought it was a big deal. When the LP came out it was as though Oklahoma was finally on the map. Of course it really wasn't. But it did show everyone else that there was more than cows and oil to our state. I was one of those sorry little shits yelling for the band to turn it up louder between songs. I would press my head against the speakers absorbing as much sound as I possibly could. The fact that I can hear today is a wonder!

I loved that band! Still do. I had many button up shirts with N.O.T.A. artwork magic marked on the back and front pocket sleeves. I still have a zip up plaid jacket with a hand painted N.O.T.A. patch on the front that I wear on occasion. When the T-shirts would wear out I would sew the graphic onto a jean jacket. I drew the No U-turn symbol they used over the logo of my Converse. Spray painted their name on every overpass and skate spot I hit. Home alone I would put their records on and scream along to every single song. Totally geeky shit, and it must have sounded like a domestic dispute to the neighbors to hear someone shouting at the top of their lungs.

When N.O.T.A. started to fall apart the Oklahoma scene of the '80s fell apart with them. People started moving away. Face First relocated to Kansas City. Darren Mock eventually left Face First to play bass for Verbal Assault. Russel Love from N.O.T.A. moved back to Arkansas, and the replacement guitar players were lacking the fire and ability to keep those songs intact. Bob, the drummer, eventually moved on too. Once the band dissolved, Jeff started Crimes Against Humanity. To my knowledge they did one demo, and later on when Jeff brought back the name, N.O.T.A., they re-recorded "No Chance." The new N.O.T.A. was good, but not the same as the original. But then, nothing is as good as the original. Different people and different times. But I will forever see them as the high mark to try and reach, and possibly surpass.

What is up with the lack of flyers these days? It's not just a LA problem either. I'm hearing from bands from all over that no one is flyer for shows anymore. And if they do flyer it's pretty piss poor. Putting a few flyers in a record store a week before the show is not good flyer. Or as has happened all too often, making a flyer two days before the show is even worse. Posting show dates on message boards and websites only goes so far. Not everyone looks at them. Flyer has to be the simplest aspect of running a show. As soon as you have the dates confirmed and the venue secured, make the flyer. If you don't have all the opening bands confirmed, then just put TBA on the damn thing. Let's be honest, no one gives a shit about local bands (unfortunately!). Especially in LA!!! Unless you're in a local band. It doesn't hurt at all to flyer two months before the show. And hit all the record shops and any shows between now and then. Hit the record stores again and again restocking the flyers. Take note of the way the Jehovah's Witnesses get their information around. Okay, so you don't need to go canvassing the neighborhoods, but get off your ass and get the flyers out there!! Of course hit the message boards. The key is to saturate the entire area with information about the show. It increases the turn out and makes you look like you know what you're doing when it comes to running shows. In turn, the touring bands will put the word out that your town is the place to play and more bands will start coming through.

No more cover songs!!! I'm sick of bands covering Negative Approach, Black Flag, Gorilla Biscuits, and any other band. It doesn't make your band look good. If anything it only highlights the weak points of your sound and lack of powerful song writing. So you find those bands inspiring and want to honor them? Then try and write something original and as powerful, or perhaps even more powerful. It can be done. Quit being a stooge for the past. Especially for those who were too young to witness the overly covered bands in the first place. It amounts to nothing more than a cheap nostalgia trip akin to Beatlemania. Blaaaahhh... And the audience... Fuck, talk about a bunch of cheap suckers. A band will be on stage (or on the floor) going through a set of originals. The response is tepid. The too cool audience stands there with arms folded and blank facial expressions. Suddenly the band covers "Rise Above" or "Start Today" or "Can't Tell No One." BLAMO!!! The audience suddenly springs to life and starts dancing around like a flushed toilet, grabbing at the mic to sing along because they're oh so inspired to be for that one moment John Bannon, Civ, or Henry Rollins. Clenched fist, dumbass finger pointing, tough guy facial expressions acted out by a nerd who was probably dumped in the trashcan of the school cafeteria to the amusement of everyone, the whole nine. The bad cover song ends and suddenly everyone is looking lost. Just like they were during the set of originals. Don't lower yourself for the audience. Make them come up to your level!!! If you feel you must add a cover to your set, then why not try something like "Interstellar Overdrive" from Pink Floyd? It would be wonderful to see the fickle crowd suddenly turn into Syd Barret. Then I'd be impressed. Other than that, NO MORE COVER SONGS!!!!

Short sets good. Long sets bad.
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Sasha Rex

A few months ago my friend Robert e-mailed me a critique of my column in the Education Issue (HaC #38). He made two important points that I will discuss here. His first comment regarded my dismissal of so-called "student-athletes," in particular college basketball and football players. I wrote about my disappointment and disgust that these players receive massive scholarships to prestigious universities, and then fail to take advantage of the intellectual resources made available to them. Robert's response was to question my understanding of the process, and in hindsight I made a shortsighted generalization and for that I apologize. Robert pointed out that college football and basketball players are conditioned from middle school to play sports and do little else at school—the educational institution acts as a means towards athletic competition, an excuse to play the game. The student-athlete is driven by the remote possibility of parlaying his skills into a professional career; a path emphasized by his coaches, peers, and often the schools themselves. At the same time the school, particularly colleges, use the American obsession with basketball and football to rake in millions of dollars in donations, ticket sales, television contracts, and corporate sponsorship. I cannot blame those who are inundated with a pipe dream of professional sports for not easily rejecting that idea in favor of intellectual pursuits.

Robert's second point can be applied to most of the education columns in that issue. He questioned my support of the institution of public education, in particular my acceptance of my position in an inherently authoritarian endeavor. He asks why so many in the punk community ignore the role that public schools play in American society—why is being a teacher any different from being a cop or being a politician? In all three cases one joins an authoritarian, oppressive organization or structure that cannot be reformed. Becoming a "cop for the kids" won't change the nature of the police force. Becoming a city council member won't change the nature and corruption of representative government in the US. Similarly, how will being a teacher change the fact that public schools are designed to train children to become "productive members of society" without actually educating them?

The reality of my job brings these beliefs and Robert's critique into focus. I'm not making a difference; I'm not reforming the system. At most I am fighting an unwinnable battle and carving out a tiny space where students can attempt to learn in a slightly different atmosphere. I revised my definition of a punk rock teacher, and still I don't live up to my ideal. I try, and I can easily blame my shortcomings on the system—but wasn't I supposed to overcome the system?

Are punk teachers teaching from a radical standpoint, or are we selling out our ideals in order to make a small dent in a monolithic fortress? When I think about education I think of

DIY learning, a love of or desire for knowledge, and meaningful experiences. When I think about public education in these terms I think of an inefficient framework where education is possible, but it is mostly hindered and rarely encouraged. Can radical teachers transform their classrooms? Yes, but it is difficult. I don't believe that the flexibility necessary for true education can be found in a rigid public classroom, and the most I can do is bend a few walls. I will never destroy them. We have to compromise in order to stay employed, and the extent of that compromise will grow as the pressure from test-obsessed administrators, authoritarian colleagues, and state-mandated curriculums increases. Where do you draw the line? When do you admit that the system is full of shit; that you're not going to take it any more; that you won't play your role... that you won't play at all?

When I wrote my last column I expected that the No Child Left Behind legislation would prevent me from teaching. Fortunately I underestimated the power of a Mathematics degree, and I received a job offer after a short interview. While I gladly accepted the position, I believed that I would be working illegally according to federal law. After some basic research and an excellent article in the *Washington Post* I realized that No Child Left Behind contained an escape route for everyone involved except the children. No Child Left Behind requires, among other provisions, that all teachers are properly certified and that all students continually improve such that every student is considered "proficient" by 2014. The loophole is that each state defines "certified," "proficient," and other terms. Thus, with my education background (no education coursework, limited teaching experience) I would not be considered "certified" according to the state of Maryland in 2002. In 2003 Maryland tweaked their definition, and thus I am "certified," but on the lowest level and with conditions. This is necessary in order to alleviate the teacher shortage in various subjects (especially Math—11 vacancies in Montgomery County a full week after school began—and Special Education) while complying with No Child Left Behind.

The state also defines "proficient," but with some specific requirements (and even these can be manipulated). All students must be considered "proficient" by 2014, including all minorities as well as those who speak English as a second language and special education students. "Proficiency" will be measured by federally approved standardized testing, as in the federal government approves the content of the test and little else. The states control how the test will be administered, how it will be graded, what weight each part of the test carries, and the passing, "proficient" score. Thus a test that must include multiple choice and essay questions can be weighted towards the multiple choice (90% versus 10% or less for the essays) and the passing grade can be a 50%. As illustrated in the *Washington Post* article, the states can determine what groups must improve by changing the size of the group. In Maryland, where the minimum number of students is 5, a school with 15 Special Ed students must assure that they are improving. Compare that to Virginia, where the minimum number is 23—a Virginia school with 15 Special Ed students

can let those students fall behind because it is not a large enough group to count.

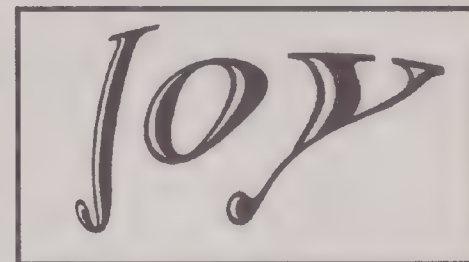
Although it began with noble intent, after being mauled by politicians, financially strangled, and manipulated by the states, No Child Left Behind will fail to reform or even address the fundamental flaws in the American public education system. There will be superficial changes and declarations of success, but beneath the spin nothing will change.

I'm teaching Algebra at Einstein High School in Montgomery County, Maryland (just north of DC). It's a difficult school, with large gaps between the rhetoric, the expectations, the funding, and the realities. I am under extreme pressure to perform a task that rational people would consider impossible. The contradiction of being an anti-authoritarian in an authoritative position eats away at me. I don't like it, and I don't plan on doing it again next year. At the same time I have a great relationship with my students. I don't know if I am helping them or teaching them, sometimes I'm elated by what happens in the classroom, but most of the time I am just there. I think it's time to quit.

Questions, comments, criticisms, or remarks: xrobotx@yahoo.com

The email exchange I had with Robert, as well as other insightful comments, can be found at <http://www.livejournal.com/users/xmobiuxs/222105.html>

The Washington Post article can be found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A60962-2003Sep24.html>



More than just another crowd, we need a gathering instead.

Around February of 2003 I toured Mexico with my anarcho-hardcore punk band for six weeks. We hitch-hiked the entire tour. We borrowed equipment to play at the shows, which was easy to do since many of the collectives that set up shows take on the responsibility of providing equipment if needs be. There were many differences between the "punk" we experienced in Mexico and the "punk" we know around the United States. Privilege obviously plays into this factor. For example many punks I know in Mexico can not afford the time away from helping their family to listen to records all day. But sometimes privilege is your poverty in disguise. The following is thoughts on why I fell in love with certain aspects of punk shows throughout Mexico which I hardly ever encounter in the United States.

It all started after a show I enjoyed in Hermosillo, Mexico, when all the punks were enlivening the stale night. The venue that supported the show had closed for the night. Everyone wanted more because the show had contained that special energy in it that does not

come with every show, but when it is created, it is a fundamental reason why "punk" has continued to resist and exist throughout countless downfalls and attempted corporate takeovers. When the police thought it was time for the gathered peoples to disperse, the gathered peoples voiced their opinions of different ideas. I proposed a soccer game as a possibility for reason enough to not go home and some of the group migrated to a field nearby. People did not leave until they were exhausted and physically could not take much more. This was one of those nights where people were brought together.

There are also those nights that people go to shows and do not feel an intimate sensation about the evening. Those nights are not surprising considering shows and bands have become so much of what it is to be punk. Don't get me wrong, I feel that shows are an excellent part of punk's potential but shows are definitely not all that punk has to offer. It concerns me whenever I hardly hear punks talk of anything else but shows because I feel a definite difference between talking about shows at home and talking about home at shows.

That difference was clear in Mexico when I purposely would state during our set that anyone should feel free to use the microphone whenever they had anything to say, whether adding to the topics in our songs, or completely off subject with what we were screaming or talking about, whether in between songs, or right in the middle. The reason behind this is that it has always been important to me to actively disrupt the division between active and passive participants at shows.

In Mexico, at more than one show, some of the peeps took action on this and spoke about local issues, personal dilemmas, dreams, and desires. I have never seen anyone in the United States accept my offer to use the microphone during our set. I know that intimidation technicalities exist strong in the United States but I feel that most shows are small enough that shows could be intimate not intimidating.

This rant-ish typing is not meant to pin up the Mexican "punk" I experienced versus the "punk" in the United States, but just to note a difference and a desire. I wish more often I would leave shows on a high because I did bear witness to someone confront a fear or confuse a formality by taking a chance that the gathering they have come across is a supportive one, a revolutionary one... that someone, whether in a band or not, made a spectacle of hope that community was possible. (I have tried numerous times to reword this part but find it one of those ideas that words just seem to do little justice).

I understand that we live in an over-stimulated society and several cities around the country, have a number of good punk shows every week, if not every night, and therefore it is not surprising that we do not use punk shows as much as an arena for release with dance, conversation, and contemplation, as we would if we only had the opportunity, like many towns in Mexico, to gather at a punk show once a month.

After many shows both in Mexico and the United States there are parties of the potluck kind and/or the beer gut kind. Which seem to me to be proof that the gatherings we know as shows

can reach beyond the superficial barriers created by limiting definitions of scenes. These happenings are proof that punk does not have to be something that defines people but instead punk can be something that can be redefined show after show, or the morning after the show, or without a show at all.

After tour in Mexico, we traveled around the United States and have settled most of our time in Pittsburgh in preparation for tour in Europe. After attending two shows here I happily noticed the aggressive movement towards reclaiming the potential to redefine punk. At the first show, The Moment, a Pittsburgh punk project epitomized my hopes by incorporating jazz and hip-hop and stylish suits into their punk and speaking often about the tall walls "punk" can build up around us if we do not continuously tear them down. The last band I watched at the other show was an improvisational act of who-ever wished to play and the set was amazing, and an amazing gift for the birthday boy who planted that idea's original seed. Both shows were extremely intimate and seemed to have a very ambivalent border between audience and band.

Many shows in Mexico and United States have left me with a desire to call them an "event." They deserve it. They take my evening, night, and sometimes early morning and over-stimulate it with relations and confrontations that I feel were shared amongst people who will all wake up different people tomorrow, if they ever sleep again.

Punk shows, from DIY ethic-filled venues to basements brimming with homebrew, have always maintained their shock value. Not because of the dress or attitude but because of how punk has remained redefinable. At various phases of time, I perceive punk shows to succumb to such sickening symptoms of society such as hero worship or heavy disassociation between those on a stage and those in the crowd, but then I am in Los Angeles at the Autonomy reunion show and I listen to a very aggressive looking punk use the word beautiful, as well as tears around his eyes, to describe the band he just watched. This is the shock value I speak of now, and speak of now as a call out for something more. And a thank you for that something more that I have experienced so far... tomorrow... tomorrow.

Any questions to the Vagabond Collective or Fear Is The Mindkiller about Mexico or anything else can be directed to vagabondcollective@yahoo.com or www.geocities.com/vagabondcollective/An



Laura Close moves fast. I first met her at a student activist conference when she was on tour with Call to Action giving workshops around the country. In between leading workshops on group decision making and strategic planning she would stop for a minute to talk with other young activists. I'd hear her say things like: "We need to learn the skills, to build our movements, to build our power,

to win concrete demands and stick with it for the long haul." At 21 she was the national organizer of the STARC Alliance, Students Transforming and Resisting Corporations. She's been to over 70 campuses around the United States and given over 100 workshops. She teamed up with Nisha Anand to lead anti-racism trainings in the majority white sections of the global justice movement. She helped put together a training program with STARC that now includes grassroots organizing, direct action, women's leadership and against classism workshops. She worked with a team of organizers to develop an 8-week intensive training program for student activists to learn organizing skills and develop their political analysis. Her work is guided by a commitment to developing other people's leadership.

Many have said that the mass actions in Seattle helped launch a new generation of activists and I agree. But often movement building is talked about as if it's a spontaneous phenomenon. I do believe that material conditions of systemic injustice and the fundamental drive for dignity and justice are at the core of why movements develop. And I also believe that the billions (literally) of hours of hard work by people like Laura Close are at the heart of how movements grow. Charles Payne, an historian of the Civil Rights movement, writes in *I've Got The Light Of Freedom*:

"Overemphasizing the movement's more dramatic features, we undervalue the patient and sustained effort, the slow, respectful work, that made the dramatic moments possible."

That work has been and continues to be overwhelmingly done by women. The struggle for effective organizing that winds justice is very much connected to building movement that develops, promotes, recognizes and values women's leadership. Laura Close has taught me much about sustained and respectful work over the years and organizers like her around the world are building our movements for liberation.

HaC: How did you get into politics and what led you to become an organizer?

LC: My Jewish mother passed on a rich tradition of protest to me that began with my family arriving in the US during WWII. She taught me to be very self-aware; she was also an organizer while I was growing up. First she worked with Results, a national grassroots network started in the seventies to pressure the US government to fund hunger programs; they also emphasize supporting people in discovering their ability to affect political change. Later when the first Bush ran for office she signed on with the Democratic Party as precinct leader for the Dukakis campaign. I remember door knocking in our neighborhood when I was 8, my mom was trying to engage people in political conversations and all I could think about was needing to pee and whether or not they'd let me use the bathroom. My stepfather (who joined us when I was 7) is also radical and raised me on a diet of philosophy and current politics. So I was raised politically, but it wasn't until I had participated in Earth First! and other white anarchist groups, a successful campus anti-sweatshop campaign, and several mass protests that I began to value organizing.

Initially, as an activist, I hated the divide I perceived between activism & organizing. But

since that time I have engaged in organizing work and you can just feel the difference. It was my friend Dara Silverman who first encouraged me to call myself an "organizer" and take pride in my work. Organizing is about building power, and building people's organizations that can stick around to win not only one victory, but many thereafter. I think the majority white activist world I participated in for years was essentially scared of power. It seems to me that we felt so powerless in the face of mainstream society's death march that we created myths out of corporations and the government. We made them into devils and we made them so out of reach that the very idea of having power or building it was inherently evil because that's what we associated with them—power.

As activists, never had a conversation about increasing our power to fight back, we primarily talked and operated from a perspective of lashing out: an action here, a covert event there, a conference here, and a mobilization there. The question of how effective these events and actions were was sometimes debated but ultimately people seemed offended if the topic was pursued too long.

It seemed that at the end of the day, everything we did was inherently justified by our intent (to destroy the government/capitalism, save the forest, end sweatshop labor). In organizing I find my work justified by the effectiveness (how much money was directed to low income families, which new person is gaining skills and confidence, which government official we held accountable), which is how I think it should be. Intent is nice but it doesn't bring down the government.

As my hunger to see an effective people's movement in the United States grew, I began looking around me for people and groups modeling effective, liberation focused work. I found that community organizers were doing the hardest most amazing work—building skills and confidence with the people most hurt by oppression. And for me, women and transgendered folks who believe in themselves continue to be an inspiration within that world of community organizing. My friends Nisha Anand and Kim Marks were some of the first women to really model self-love as well as unashamed public leadership to me.

HaC: You were the national organizer for Students Transforming and Resisting Corporations and have been involved in student activism for years. What is STARC and what role do you see it playing in the broader student movement?

LC: STARC is a network of student and youth activist groups across the country who at their core agree with our principles of anti-racism, liberation, and quality organizing. The typical kid (like me) comes into STARC all fired up to save the world and comes out skilled, and ready to focus locally & strategically and a lot more dedicated to the long haul that is movement building. I highly recommend that anyone reading this article apply for our 8-week Summer Organizing Institute in San Francisco at Starcalliance.org

I joined STARC at the start of my sophomore year of college, having seen the power of national coordination play out in the WTO

protests in Seattle I realized that the work we were doing locally at University of Oregon might improve if we were in contact with other young activists. I went on to become west coast coordinator and called students from Hawaii to Southern California to Wyoming on a regular basis and began to understand we were facing a mutual problem: lack of skills. Well, that's normal since we were all young and just really getting involved in many ways. The problem was we (including myself) basically thought if we tried hard enough we could just make it all up. Well, that's called "reinventing the wheel" since there is a basic skill set to organizing that you need to learn, you can use it when and how you see fit. But it's sort of vocational, I would never tell a car mechanic or an organizer that they had an easy job, ya know?

That's why STARC is so amazing, we work with young activists who are typically white and middle class who are just waking up to their outrage. Demographically, a lot of these kids start on their radical path motivated by their anger at powerful corporations. So we work with them in that belief and we support them in building skills, building an analysis of power in the US, building confidence and building our community of resistance. Typically STARCies, including myself, graduate from our corporate rage to a more complex outlook that focuses on our role as middle class allies in the struggle and informs our political work.

The year I was national organizer for STARC I visited over a dozen campuses and our Summer Organizing Institute was created by myself, the previous year's organizer Eric Romann and a team of other folks. We were motivated to create a stable institution that energetic student activists can look to as a place to learn skills and reflect on the work they've already done. So spread the word people.

HaC: You've put an enormous amount of time and energy into anti-oppression work in the mostly white sections the student movement and global justice movement. You and your training partner Nisha Anand have done anti-racism workshops with groups all over the country. Could you talk about what anti-oppression work is, how you've been practicing it and how it relates to building social justice movements?

LC: These days my definition is that Anti-Oppression work is the practice of liberating yourself in order to act as an effective force for social justice. You just can't do this work unless you're willing to look inside yourself and be changed in your core. The work is not about Helping The Oppressed, as a person with skin/class privilege its about changing my life and behaviors. And that shit is h-a-r-d. I change my life and behaviors because I understand that my intent not to be racist is beautiful, but when my actions don't reflect my intent, well, the impact is that I perpetuate oppression on the people without skin/class privilege that I interact with.

A couple big things I work on currently are: Concretely supporting the organizers of color I work with and making space for my white friends from poor families. Something that became evident when I reflected on the first couple years of my anti-racist ally practices was that my practice was very externally focused. Not only was I not keeping the work in my heart/

internal to myself, I was not really focusing on the organizers and activists of color who I saw and worked with on a regular basis. I was doing the work for people of color everywhere keeping it specific and real was very hard. So now I try to take my friends out to lunch, make a point of publicly thanking them for their contribution, of asking them questions like "Do you need any help? If so, can I help?" or "What are you working on right now?" A key thing is also publicly supporting their suggestions and ideas when the opportunity arises in meetings and events. I also like to ask my friends of color to give me feedback on my current strategies and plans, building those casual but consistent forms of accountability.

As far as supporting my white friends from working class and poor families, this relates to learning my anti-racism from white men. Not only did I try to keep race and class really separate, but I was also mildly traumatized by white guys who would freak out about their class oppression and then use it as a wall to hide from their racism. So I stopped talking about class, which was unhealthy to say the least. I constantly struggle with the "charity" thing that us middle class femme whiteys are hit hard with. That is, basing my work out of desire to help the needy rather than reclaim myself and fight oppression. So talking about class is really important to my own well being and contributes mightily to my ability to really be changed by the ideas, stories, and concerns that my working class friends bring to the table.

HaC: As a white anti-racist what are some challenges you've faced and what are some lessons you've learned?

LC: As I already mentioned, I learned my anti-racism from white men. Like all other places in the movement it seems white men are too often held up as experts on anti-racism. Well, the result was me thinking that we had to separate race, from class, from ethnicity, from gender, from sexuality. What a mess. This approach ultimately enabled the guys to retain power over me and other gender oppressed people by using anti-racism to hide from their sexism. Reading Audrey Lorde and working with people of color, women and trans folks has helped me to move and now honor the complex identities that each person brings to the table. Yeah, when I get confused I turn to multiracial feminist books from the late seventies, that material is killer it always rocks my world.

The second big lesson that I struggle with every day is extracting anti-racism from my intellectual side, my brain, and keeping it focused on and grounded in my heart. More specifically, I've observed that I and most white people usually make the biggest mistakes when we're acting cerebral, only reading books for instance, or rationalizing our behavior. We have the most success when we are grounded in our own ability to have hurt feelings, our desire to change our own lives, when we establish genuine relationships with people of color. Operating out of a heart-based place is very difficult, but imperative to my work.

HaC: In working with student groups nationally, you've written about the importance of building confidence in young people, the importance of supporting women's leadership and the need for men to be allies to each other in the struggle against sexism. Can you say more about each of

these?

LC: I talk about building confidence in young people and others due two main reasons. One, I had my own confidence in my ability to take leadership built up and felt the difference, and two, my friend Dara Silverman explained to me that organizing is the task of building powerful organizations by building skills, confidence, and analysis one person at a time. That saying really contextualized my lived experience. As my confidence was built I was able to more effectively build the organizations I worked in. This has made me a big advocate of confidence building.

Basically, as a woman, I know we get acceptance & approval when we fulfill our gender role and place ourselves second. So we work our asses off in movement organizations accommodating and supporting the leadership of others. I was doing that for sure, and then I got the chance to go on a tour in fall of 2000 and lead women's groups at 25 different locations from NYC to Arkansas to Iowa to LA. These consciousness-raising groups allowed the women participating to understand that their lived oppression was a shared experience. That sexism still exists. Sexism is not the only battle of course, but good lord—the value of consciousness raising groups cannot be underestimated. It was definitely a little depressing to think that this work is going to always be needed with each generation, to renew our understandings that we each participate in a shared, systemic oppression. What sticks with me are the looks on these women's faces as they shared their stories as they were listened to and validated on topics ranging from rape in their activist community to the lack of recognition for their activism to how hard it is to love themselves.

To men reading this I'd say, please publicly support each other in becoming allies to women and trans people in your groups. Most important I think is mentoring the incoming younger or newer men to the movement. Make a point of taking them out to coffee and sharing with them the ways in which you struggle with sexism. Keeping these relationships public helps to establish a cultural norm of men discussing their sexism with each other. Having recently returned to college and thus college organizing locally, I am reintroduced to the profound need for male to male mentors among my group members. [Note: Here in Portland there is a men's group established which I have great hope for.] This all of course is hopefully complimented by women and trans people working to decolonize our minds through consciousness raising and other tools. As part of the decolonization process I feel there's a never ending need to publicly recognize and honor the hard work of these people who are consistently and systematically made invisible.

HaC: What keeps you going when it seems like ruling class forces are winning and that racism, classism, sexism and heterosexism strengthen their power while they undermine the power of social justice movements?

LC: My (white anti-racist) women's group, my partner, my local network of friends whom I have very intentionally invested energy into after the revelation that I *deserve* friends.

Many activists and organizers suffer because we do hard social justice work and deny ourselves the luxury of friends. I learned that if I

do not have a network of supportive people it is all my doing. I also depend on political hip-hop, bell hooks, multiracial feminist literature, and my unflagging desire for a people's uprising.

HaC: As a young person who has been heavily involved in activism what does it mean to you to be healthy and take care of yourself so you can be in the struggle for the long haul?

LC: Oh god, I need health care. We all need health care. Anyone reading this who is bored: go out and organize around health care. I want to have babies so I would like an organizing job that I can support many people on. (I would like capitalism to end, but in the mean time I'd like better pay.)

Having recently enjoyed an instance of it in my own life, I need more men in the movement to take a private and public stand to own their sexism. I am starving for that work.

I also need ongoing trainings and workshops that allow reflection on my actions. Most critically I need people who are as committed like me to watch movies with, strategize with, bake for, lockdown to, push me/be pushed, give me back rubs and ass kickings when appropriate.



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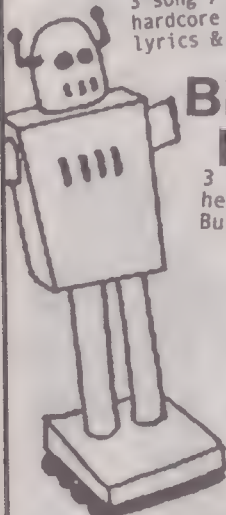
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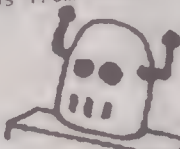


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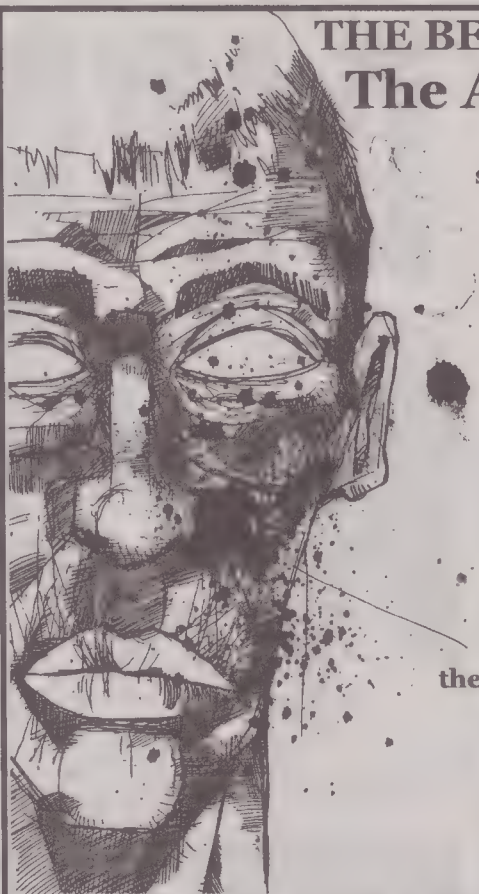
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16 • Zoloff Smile CD

Helmet may be long gone, but 16 still live on. Crushing riffs that work it with a relentless attack. The sort of music that needs to be cranked up real fuggin' loud. And even louder than that. This is the sort of music the "nu-metal" heads should be blasting in their earphones smoking cigarettes while waiting for the school bus. Tense tempos, throbbing bass lines, and ear splitting guitars push lyrics about cheap sex, drugs, alienation, and Damone from *Fast Times At Ridgemont High*. MA (At A Loss/PO Box 582/Eastlake, CO 80614-0582)

17TH CLASS • In Utter Contempt Of The Human Race CD

Excellent follow up to their previous EP. Super raw and sloppy hardcore with belligerent vocals. Very early '80s influenced from the music on down to the lyrics (instead of Reagan they sing about Bush). The songs are semi tight and sometimes self destruct, such as the Reagan Youth cover "No Class." They left out "Black Tide" which appears on the vinyl version. So try and get the vinyl first. Or get them both. MA (PO Box 1084/ Buffalo, NY 14215)

30 YEARS WAR • Under The Gun CD

Six tracks. Highly aggressive hardcore that has kind of an old school edge, but still ends up sounding very fresh and modern (maybe due to lost of tempo changes and relatively complicated song structures). Kinda as if you'd cross The Suicide File with other bands that like to cover Black Flag, like Knives Out, maybe. Hmm, I don't know, maybe that's a horrible comparison. This is for anybody who's into angry music with a lot of forward drive. The vocals are screamed, but he doesn't overdo it, they sound just really pissed off, without being pissy. This is pretty good. MH (Substandard/PO Box 310/Berkeley, CA 94701)

1000 TRAVELS OF JAWAJARLAL • Qwari Wa Konai LP

Nine melodic mid-paced hardcore songs by this Japanese trio. A couple of songs have a slight upbeat/poppy feel, while the majority are well played straight forward rockers coupled with a strong recording to really make these songs shine. The main vocals are screamed/sung in Japanese with the lyrical content falling in the personal/political realm, all of which have an overall positive outlook on life. 1000 Travels Of Jawajarlal are at their best when they incorporate catchy choruses, like "erabu erabu kotoga dekirunda" for their song "Erabukoto" or "Choose." This song advocates thinking for yourself: "I can think by myself/I can choose the best way." Also, the opening track "Egao (To Tsuba)" incorporates excellent screamy backing vocals, which lends to the strength of the song (not to mention the vocals sound exactly like Mike Kirsch). There are only 2 or 3 songs with backing vocals, but it's a definite strong point, which I would like to see explored more in the future. A strong dual vocal attack could make 1KTOJ one of the premier hardcore bands of Japan. PK (Day After Recs./PO Box 153/35201 As/Czech Republic)

ACK ACK ATTACK • CD

This is good. Could be great. Their instrumental numbers "Oh! Oh! You're Only Cardboard!" and "... Y Como Una De La Carne Duele La Separacion" are excellent. Ambient and introspective reminding me of Godspeed You Black Emperor and June 44 (without the vocals). These two tracks are indicative of a great band. When they go into the songs with the vocals they loose the tone set up by the opening track, as well as the individuality they display in the instrumentals. Don't get me wrong. They do it well. But their real strength is in ambient compositions. Hopefully there's more to come and I'm really hoping they'll write and record more stuff like that for any upcoming releases. MA (28 Lawrence St./Danvers, MA 01923)

ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT • What We're For Is What... 7"

Okay, this isn't as bad as it looks. I was looking at this, judging it by its art, and was like "ugh." Well, its actually pretty good (or my fucking turn table makes everything sound raw). I'd say there's a heavy old Jawbreaker influence here musically, though the vocals are sung by a female, with the occasional male shouting in the background about protesting. Four songs here. These guys could get very big in the Bay area unless they already are? Who knows, who cares? NW (Left Of The Dial/PO Box 3941/Oakland, CA 94609)

AMAZING DEVICE • The Quiet Room CD

Ha Ha Ha! Okay, I think Kent and Lisa have just punk'd me. Where the hell is Ashton Kutcher!? I am not going to review the appalling music that this band plays. If you want to know what they sound like then turn on the radio. I think I would much rather review the two (not one, but two) promo shots of these assholes that are in booklet for this CD. A booklet that has six "thank you" lists, some "credits," and no room for lyrics. Okay, so the first promo shot is in black and white. It looks like the four dudes (and I mean dudes) are in a warehouse of sorts, after hours of the make up room. Leather jackets and tough looks. Fucking classic. The picture on the back is in color, and a little more laid back. The art director has let the singers hair out of his dorky pony tail while he sits in a backwards folding chair. Everyone else in the band stands around him with these, "Man, this is it! We are gonna make it! We are gonna get so fucking laid!" looks on their brash faces. Guess what hot shots, your parents only said they liked your band so they wouldn't hurt your feelings. I hear the In N Out Burger on Camrose is hiring. MAH (Tribunal/PO Box 49322/Greensboro, NC 27419)

ASHEN • Pull And Repel CD

These five songs from Ashen set a mild mood. The rock here is melodic low and smooth, with a few building elements to let vocals and guitar crescendo together. Her sweet vocals fit well with the easy tones of the instruments. It is an emotive indie experience that is tight and well done. LO (Two Sheds Music/PO Box 5455/Atlanta, GA 31187)

ANUBUS RISING • Scales Of Truth LP

Being from SoCal I have seen Anubis Rising several times and have been able track their musical progression from the demo CD to this new (mini?) LP. Powerful and moody doom metal crust with songs that have a nice deal of structure depth and feeling. The vocals are of a black metal type scream and with some very low growled parts in all the right spots. I have always thought Sacha could write a great song. CF (Tansgalactic Ladder/PO Box 104/Wilmington, CA 90748)

ARMY OF PONCH • Vs. The Curse CD/EP

This is some powerful and driven rocking emotional hardcore. These chaps have got something here. At first listen I didn't think it was so good, but more volume on a better stereo proved me wrong. Another champion of melodic intensity from Florida, this CD has three tracks on it CD (Sabot Productions/PO Box 28/Gainesville, FL 32602)

ANY LAST WORDS • 7"

Each time I listen to this record I had a hard time getting much of a description out of my head. They play thrashing hardcore with a big youth crew influence; I guess that is all that really needs to be said. Lots of places to sing along, scream "go," or generally get your harsh on. Any Last Words have an unrelenting tempo that gets a hold of you and will not let go. Classic; the more I listen the more I dig their pissed vibe. One of my favorite things about this record doesn't have much to do with the band... the artwork. The guitarist came up with some crisp images for this. His drawings are pretty, bloody, and crazy, but done so well I have to call it art. LO (Havoc Recs./PO Box 8585/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

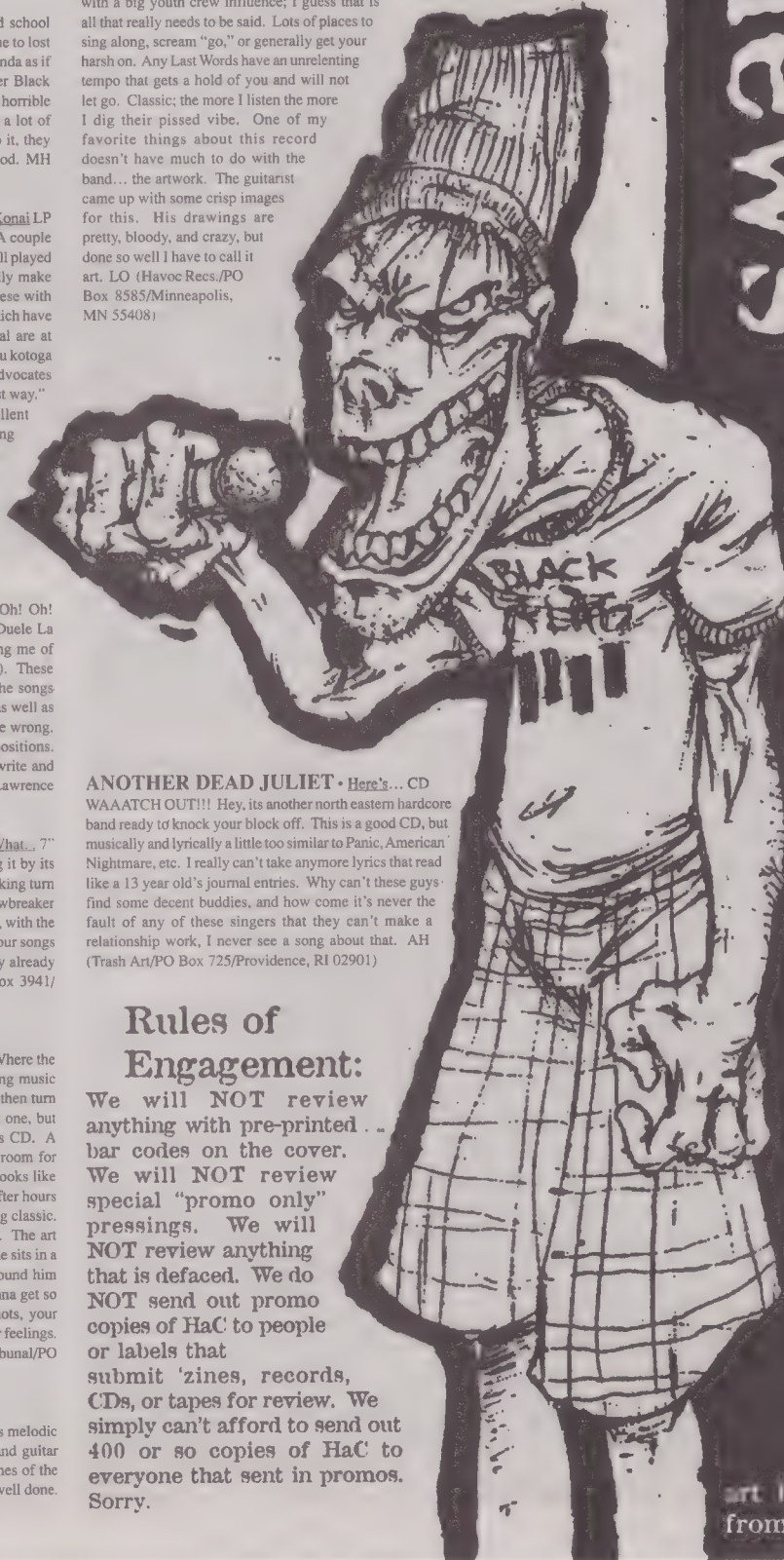
ANOTHER DEAD JULIET • Here's... CD

WAAATCH OUT!!! Hey, its another north eastern hardcore band ready to knock your block off. This is a good CD, but musically and lyrically a little too similar to Panic, American Nightmare, etc. I really can't take anymore lyrics that read like a 13 year old's journal entries. Why can't these guys find some decent buddies, and how come it's never the fault of any of these singers that they can't make a relationship work, I never see a song about that. AH (Trash Art/PO Box 725/Providence, RI 02901)

Rules of Engagement:

We will NOT review anything with pre-printed bar codes on the cover. We will NOT review special "promo only" pressings. We will NOT review anything that is defaced. We do NOT send out promo copies of HaC to people or labels that submit 'zines, records, CDs, or tapes for review. We simply can't afford to send out 400 or so copies of HaC to everyone that sent in promos. Sorry.

Record Reviews



KM=Kent McClard, AH=Aaron Hall, DH=Dave Hall, ES=Evan Skår, CD=Chris Duprey, DJ=Dave Johnson, MAH=Mike Haley, CF=Chuck Franco, NW=Nate Wilson, MH=Marianne Hofstetter, CU=Christian Unsinn, FTL=Fil Mako, JB=Jenn Bartlett, MA=Matt Average, PK=Paul Kane, SJS=Steve Snyder, & LO=Lisa Oglesby

art by Jon Davidson
from The Avow Book

THE ASSISTANT • We'll Make The Roads By Walking CD

Prepare to be taken aback by the sheer weight of this recording. The Assistant moves in heavy, thick, and powerful tones. Their songs are epics, full of dramatic weight and intricate melody. When I think of this band, I expect screamo. The Assistant is so much more than that. They can be heavy as all hell and then totally emo in the same motion. I like the way they infuse diversity into the songs. This holds true in their lyrics as well. Personal struggle, politics, hope, rage, love, and living are the main themes here. Reading through the booklet it is gratifying and inspirational trip. This CD is positive and brutal in the best ways possible. LO (Alone Recs./PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

ASSCHAPPEL • Fire And Destruction LP

This LP is a brick in the face. Definitely blunt force trauma to the skull. Maybe a crushed rib cage will suffice. Asschapel lays down twelve tracks of sheer metalized head banging destruction. The music is an onslaught of dual vocal screams, tight Slayer like triplet palm muting and thick riffage, double bass drumming and break neck punk beats, this all can only equal one thing... death. You can even get a taste of that Nashville sound a little in the song structure. If you ask me Asschapel is way more manic and musically charged then most bands that are out right now. Asschapel is a musical force to be reckoned with. The intensity of the music carries on from song to song like a berserker in the midst of battle who effortlessly swings his axe and is covered in the blood of his foes. It is he alone who stands victorious upon the wasteland. Follow the fist and see these maniacs live; you would have never thought that these friendly guys from Nashville could unleash such unholy destruction. This album receives 9.5 points out of 10. This is the shit. There is a CD version from Crimes Against Humanity Records. CF (Hungry Ghost Recs./PO Box 620241/Middletown, WI 53562 or Crimes Against Humanity/ PO Box 1421/Eau Claire, WI 54702)

ANGRY FOR LIFE • Shakin' In My Boots 7"

Angry For Life plays melodic punk with a depressed tone. While the songs have an upbeat tempo and some definite rock, they ooze with pessimistic lyrics, downtrodden emotions, and a desperate edge. That gives them a typically Bay Area pop sound which I enjoy; miserable and sweet all at once. Though the songs lack a certain punch to make them especially good, I liked this record. With the enough repetition, these songs sink into you and fit like a pair of old Converse. Run down but just right. LO (Vinehill/PO Box 36131/San Jose, CA 95158)

ANIMOSITY • Shut It Down CD

Okay, I don't think the drummer is going to come out and say it, so I will do it for him: "Guys, this is very hard, but you're not good enough to play with me." With that being said, Animosity is a humdrum metal band, and Shut It Down is a humdrum ten song CD. From time to time, this sounds like Pig Destroyer, or maybe even Creation Is Crucifixion, but the guitarist feels the need to break into these '80s metal solos. Don't get me wrong, that's not a bad thing, but it just doesn't work overtop of the lightning fast drumming and the duo or trio or who knows how many singers. If you find this in a used bin for \$3 or so, get it! MAH (Tribunal/PO Box 49322/Greensboro, NC 27419)

ARROGANTA AGITATORER • Arrogans 7"

This 7" is a re-release of their 10 song EP that came out on Dishonour Records in 1983. It also features a bonus unreleased song. Unfortunately for me, I was but 8 years old when these dudes were releasing records like this. Arroganta Agitatorer do a solid job of convincing you that punk just might have been better back in the day. These songs are short, punchy, raw, and really catchy. With this kind of stuff as a base, it is no wonder why so much Swedish hardcore sounds good. Arroganta Agitatorer capture the spirit of the times with distorted guitar and straightforward vocals. Raw and basic, but perfectly so, this band is fun to listen to throughout. LO (Busted Heads/Box 275/90106 Umea/Sweden)

ARSEN • Aka König Der Monster LP

This is heavy and hard-hitting German hardcore with a dark sinister yet almost melodic sound. The approach is definitely influenced by a lot of North American bands such as Union Of Uranus or His Hero Is Gone, and yet I would say that Arsen's sound remains very German. There is a certain combination of hardcore and metal that many German bands seem to be focusing on and continually perfecting... that's where I find Arsen. The record is good, powerful, and with an intense energy. Also, the record comes with a booklet with English and German writings. It looks nice and sounds good. KM (Narshardaa Recs./Wollbergsredder 9/24113 Molfsee/Germany)

ASTERISK • Dogma CD

This is a discography containing 40 circus tunes. I'm not sure what to think of Asterisk's attempt at being extreme. One thing is different about this band, the guitar tone. It sounds a lot cleaner than most grind bands. Jangly guitars and blast beats? The other grind elements are there: barfing and shrieking vocals. There isn't much more to mention about this genre. I guess grinding music isn't only for dirty punks and metal heads; it can be artsy. The Locust proved that. Around song 23, the music starts to get a little more technical and I find myself enjoying it a little more. The layout is pretty cool looking but the lyrics aren't legible. I'm not sure if it even matters. DH (Three One G/PO Box 178262/San Diego, CA 92177)

... AND THE SAGE CONTINUES • You Can't Stop... CD

The music on this is okay, though the vocals sound to raspy for this old man. Most the songs are pretty fast, with some semi interesting parts, the vocals just kill it for me though. I'm not sure if they are going for like the crusty sound or what on this stuff. Eighteen songs in all, one of them about how bad it hurts for the dude to piss. NW (Contempt For Humanity Recs./PO Box 463 Station C/Montreal, QC/H2L 4K4/Canada)

ANTIMANIX • I'm Without Sleep... In This Desert... CD

For the most part, this album is buoyant and well played ska pop punk with some bizarre hardcore grunts and breakdowns thrown in, which are pretty misplaced and confusing, but whatever. AntimaniX have good intentions, with politically charged lyrics and a sample from The Simpsons, and are fueled with a sound that fans of the Fat Wreck Chords scene might be into. MAH (Household Name Recs./PO Box 12286/London/SW9 6FE/UK)

ANN BERETTA • The Other Side Of The Coin CD

Aw man.... this is rotten! Thirteen acoustic tracks of middle of the road rock. Imagine Poison playing "Every Rose Has A Thorn" thirteen times in a row. Smash goes my hammer, and the sound of this CD greatly improves as it flies simultaneously in a hundred different directions. MA (Thrown Brick Recs./PO Box 4831/Louisville, KY 40204)

AMEBIX • Make Some Fucking Noise! CD

This is Amebix, live in Slovenia in 1986. This recording is a little bit dirty, and the playing is a bit raw and loose in some spots. But still, this is Amebix in their prime element and sounds great and has always been an essential for any Amebix fan. You can feel the band putting their backbones into the music and the Barons one and only throat of glass and cider voice spitting the lyrics into the microphone. Amebix lived the true life of the lyrics and music, living in squats, riding motorcycles and eating off the scraps of the table. These songs probably make more sense now, even fourteen years after they were written. True, Amebix might not be for everyone. People may dismiss them as mediocre musicians, or as "spearheading" the crust punk lifestyle. Well, good for those of us who appreciate and love Amebix. It makes it that much more special for those people who can understand and feel the power of the lyrics and music that much more. Amebix has had an influence on a number of bands and people as diverse as Sepultura, Neurosis, Filth of Mankind, Misery, Warcollapse, Axe grinder, and the artist Pushead whose liner notes accompany the Arise repress LP. And even in newer bands like In the Wake Of The Plague and Depressor you can feel the specter of Amebix lurking in the chords. The list of influences probably goes on and on besides this. This album I believe, came out as a tape from the soundboard (obviously) first, then on to the hard to find bootleg LP with the same title, minus lyrics and liner notes by the Baron. This one is truly for the cult of Amebix. These eight songs are various live selections from the full-length albums Arise and Monolith. The later album, being the bands musical and lyrical pinnacle, and also the bands last cry to a rotten world. If you don't know Amebix, check out the above titles, relax, read the lyrics, and be consumed by the dark melodies, heavy palm muted guitars, the sweeping feelings of courage, hope, despair, loss, and life. These songs are truly beyond the trappings of hardcore or crust stereotypes, no matter what the "critics" may say! Long live Amebix! CF (Arson Recs./PO Box 2087/Main PO/Kingston, ON/K7L 5J8/Canada)

BLUE EYED BOY MINISTER DEATH • CD

For once, I actually agree with the bio sheet that came with this release. This band *does* sound like they are influenced by Converge and Pg. 99. Thanks folks. Blue Eyed Boy Minister Death has an appropriately emo and evil name, as their songs deal with personal passions and are played in a heavy tone. Most of these songs totally rock out in a wonderfully harmony of crashing, banging, and screaming. It is a pulled together chaos that ends up having a lot of depth. The lyrics read like one long story of degenerate sex affairs, broken hearts, and desperate times. Another bearded band of southerners throws their collective mesh hat into the hardcore ring... Thankfully, they do it well. LO (Bent Rail Foundation/PO Box 2283/Birmingham, AL 35201)

BLACK PRINT • Movement CD

Me: Hotwatermusicayswhat? This band: What? Me: Exactly. This band: Huh? Me: Nevermind. This band: No really, what are you talking about? Me: I'm saying you sound just like Hot Water Music. This band: Shit yeah we do! (High fives) MAH (Quincy Shanks/PO Box 3035/St. Charles, IL 60174)

BANZAI 606 • Bagero cassette

Moshastic, fast, and fierce hardcore from Malaysia. Suitable for anyone who circle pits in their bedroom, or carries around a bandana "just in case". MAH (Disarmament Recs. c/o Pat/No. 88/Blok 3/Seksyen 16/ 40200 Shah Alam/Selangor/Malaysia)

BOXED IN • Progression? 7"

I swear, I never see Boxed In 7" except for in the HaC review pile. Don't people in the US know about this band? Maybe not. Well you should because they are really good. Boxed In gives you furiously upbeat hardcore with a classic feel. Thrash tempo, intricate guitar, and strong vocals create a nice fusion punk rock. The passion and rage comes off the smartly written songs about our world, which adds to the sense of urgency you hear in the music. Unfortunately for Nate, this one came too late for him to get for review because I think he would be really into it. Boxed In have a classically early '80s hardcore feel in their music but it is updated with a few heavy tones that give it a nice thickness. Go out of your way to find this one. LO (Busted Heads/Box 275/90106 Umea/Sweden)

BLEEDING KANSAS • F Squad 7"

I caught these guys live a while back and was completely surprised. Expecting to hear plinky plink emo my ears were instead treated to a strain of emo (only for the breaks really) that has more to do with hardcore than shoegazing. Thick and abrasive guitar pounding rhythms and impassioned vocals. While not being a largely speedy affair there's a definite urgency in the music that will make a die hard hardcore fan take notice. Really good stuff and a band to watch for. MA (Coldbringer/PO Box 65144/Los Angeles, CA 90065)

BLACKEN THE SKIES • CD

Blacken The Skies plays dark, crusty vocalized hardcore/punk. This was produced by Phillip of Kylesa, and has that dark, brooding feeling throughout. Some of the riffs in a few songs are catchy, and the lyrics to half the songs are well written. However, the album's song structures, tempo, variety of melodies, and song lengths are often repetitive. When the band is playing a part of the song that is fast (apocalyptic crusty d-beat kind of stuff), it is accompanied by crusty vocals and sometimes a good riff. When they're playing slower stuff (which sounds like a long jam), it is drawn out way too far, creating an urge to skip to the next track. The structure of each song is relatively the same, yet it varies greatly in styles being played. Not that the best bands aren't dynamic, but these songs differ so much in style throughout each song that the flow is thrown off. Many melodies are average, and the tempo of each song is virtually the same through the entire album. If this band were to cut the lengths of their songs in half, stay focused on one main style per song (and maybe add a little variation to intensify a line of vocals, like a breakdown or a blast beat) and vary their tempos, they would be much more listenable. Their faster stuff is much better than their slower stuff, so the slow tempo stuff should go. Blacken The Skies' vocals are the most unique part, which are done by 3 people and each has a different voice and feeling, and as I said before, half of the lyrics are good. Overall, this band would be most improved by consistency in style and variation in tempo, as well as shorter songs. There's definitely a sincere effort put into this album by the musicians and their "producer," so it seems that if they tried to tighten it up, they could do it well. DJ (CrimethInc/PO Box 2133/Greensboro, NC 27402)

BEAUTIFUL NEW • CDep

This disc is great on many levels. First off, there's the music. Beautiful New sound like they could have existed in the late '80s DC scene. A mix of Embrace and Ignition with solid playing and excellent song structures. Driving, sort of dark, catchy and urgent. Then there's the lyrics. Easily some of the best I've heard in a while. All three originals are great, as well as their cover of "2+2=?" (originally by The Bob Seger System) with its updated lyrics. The vocal delivery is honest and conveys the tone of the message well. This has been in my CD player ever since it arrived in the mail. I need to hear more!!!! MA (Capsule PO Box 1801/Bellefonte, MI 48112)

THE BIPEDS • This Is Not The Future CD

I can rest assured that The Bipedes are most definitely not the future of music. I guess this band is supposed to be funny, but it's not even clever. The music is half assed pop. Forever destined to be a band playing to an empty room... MA (Handsoma Bear Recs./3744 1st Ave. #4/San Diego, CA 92103)

BETWEEN THE LINES • Wake Up Call LP

Eleven competently played Belgian youth crew songs, plus a cover of Warzone's "Dance Hard Or Die." The vocalist of Between The Lines sounds like Dexter Holland (of The Offspring) if he were fronting a late '80s youth crew band: slightly gruff on some of the faster tracks, but otherwise, a dead ringer. For the most part, the music is average for the genre, however BTL hit their stride when they pick up the pace on songs like "Burnt Out" or "Heroes" (sans the bad guitar solos). The lyrics are personal, with much of the tone being pessimistic, as the song titles of "No One" or "Nothing" immediately implies. The overall theme to the lyrics revolves around friends who change, whether it's through metaphor or directly addressed. I would be inclined to like BTL more if they had something to say in addition to the apparently troublesome idea that people change. PK (RockNRoll Radio/Oosthamsesteenweg 129/3581 Beverlo-Beringen/Belgium)

THE BANNED • Imitating Art CD

Commercial friendly "punk." As I listen through this I just think of a bad bar band that plays a never ending set while everyone restlessly awaits for the far better bands to get on stage. The song "LA Blackout" was funny. Another piss ant NYC band cries about LA with hollow threats. Word on the street here in LA is we would care less about what you think of us. Don't like our city? Don't bring your band here! As for LA going dark (as sung about in the song)... Our lights were shining brightly while you fumbled around the dark for a couple days. Har! Har! Har! Har! Har! MA (PO Box 2517 Peter Stuyvesant St./New York, NY 10009)

BENEATH THE ASHES • Nailed To Your Ruins CD

These guys play heavy melodic emotional hardcore. Lots of heavy double bass triplet breakdowns with fists waving around into the obligatory fast harmony. I want to get into this but I can't get past envisioning clean cut boys with nice haircuts executing dance routines in the "pit." While I cannot confirm that previous statement (or stereotype?), I have been around the block a few times and usually that's the story. Hey, that's cool if it's what you into. This CD has a really nice production and probably cost a bit to do. Not a bad job by a band of this style. I would probably rather listen to this then 18 Visions any day. The lyrics are really well written and rife with various meaning from personal to social. Great guitar tones on both the distorted and clean breaks where this band does a good job of capturing a strong sense of feeling. I really appreciate a band that has musical talent, is tight, and cares about a good production no matter what the style being played is. CF (State Of Grace/PO Box 8345/Berkely, CA 94707)

BROKEN CIRCLE • A Storm Within CD

Broken Circle sounds a lot like Shield and Purusam, two older bands from Umea (Sweden). This is about all that comes to my mind. Oh wait, "Euro metal" is something else I can think of right now. Their vocals tried to scare me. But they failed. I win. CU (Crash Landing Recs./Bachlaan 201/8031 HE Zwolle/The Netherlands)

BLACK FRIDAY • '29 Blackout CD

The name of the band refers to the crash of the NY Stock Exchange on October 25, 1929, which led to the Great Depression. Now if you'll take out your notebooks... Despite the name, this band does not sing about political or economical issues. So I guess we'll never see a split release with *New Deal*? Anyway, *Black Friday '29* is tough youth crew sort of along the lines of *Floorpunch*. Thick sound and pummeling percussion. While the music has a strong presence there's an urgency missing that keeps this from being interesting or memorable. MA (Crucial Response/Kaisersfeld 98/46047 Oberhausen/Germany)

THE BLACKTOP CADENCE • Chemistry For... CD

Tupac, Nirvana, The Beatles, Kiss... All bands who have released music long after their obvious demise. The Blacktop Cadence have added their name to this list with *Chemistry For Changing Times*, a nine song album on No Idea Records. Melancholy, yet dynamic songs that make me remember why I liked Hot Water Music. While these songs are pretty good, I don't really see a reason for them to be released now, being four to five years old. I suppose if you were a huge fan, or never got a chance to hear them, then you will dig this. MAH (No Idea/PO Box 14636/Gainesville, FL 32604)

BLINDSPOT A.D. • Knowledge Vs. Fear CD

In the last decade, there have been many German bands which play dark and brooding metal hardcore. So much so, German metalcore has become a separate genre in my opinion. There is something specific to the region that creates such dramatic, somber, harsh, and powerful music. Blindspot A.D. falls into this category. With their crunching dual guitar attack and merciless drum beat, they bring fury and intensity with each song. Specifically, the songs deal with despair, frustration, and the human race in a matter that fits well with this sound. They take heaviness to the extreme with these songs, even throwing in a few grind and ambient elements to keep it challenging. Metalcore fans, put down that pitiful *Cave In* record and look no further. LO (Per Koro Recs. c/o Markus Haas/Postfach 102514/28025 Bremen/Germany)

BRAMBILLA • Little Terror Creek CD

Great disc. Tuneful and urgent hardcore that brings to mind Juggling Jugulars and early Seein' Red. Sort of fast, but not thrash. Dynamic song structures with a somewhat layered sound. These guys really know how to play their instruments. As well as write some great songs. "Fragile Nicht" tells the story of an assassination plot, and the way the words are written and delivered had me on the edge of my seat. Not to mention excellent music to deliver it all. Political music without sloganeering or being contrived. Story telling, and honest opinion makes for a more effective project. One of the best releases I've heard in a while. MA (flight13.com)

BÜMBKLÄT • Ciegos

Bümbklät rips you a new one with their fiery brand of grind and metal. These songs are harsh as shit, but with a good amount of melodic backbone

to make them more than noise. They tend to come off as evil anthems to despair, disgust, and frustration. This CD has 8 songs called the *Ciegos* album as well as 6 bonus tracks to help pummel you. Intense, intricate, and precise throughout, Bümbklät's music add a little sophistication to the grind genre. LO (Slaves To Darkness Recs./no address)

COLD SHOULDER • Business As Usual 7"

More old school inspired hardcore with songs about crews and back stabbing in the scene and other original, ground breaking topics that I give tons of fuck about. MAH (Bloody Knuckles/1315 June St. #209/Hollywood, CA 90026)

COUNTDOWN TO LIFE • Tragedy Is So Irresistible CD

More metal core stuff, with bad vocals. I don't understand who is listening to this garbage? Did I mention I saw a real metal band last month? Yup, Iron Maiden. My girlfriend took me, making me feel like I was 16 again. This CD feels like there are 16 songs on it. NW (State Of Grace/PO Box 8345/Berkeley, CA 94707)

CALVARY • The Will Of The Way 7"

Three more songs of revolution summer DC inspired songs from Calvary. This record is not a big departure from the LP, not that that's a problem given how good the LP was. If anything things are bit tighter on this record. The lyrics are opaque as always, its the sort of thing where you think you know what the song is about but you're just not sure. BH (Council Recs./PO Box 220691/Chicago, IL 60622)

CATHER • Do You Love Grind? CD

Unfortunately, I don't love grind. Luckily, Cather gives you more than just noise. Most of their songs have the super fast tempo and crazed vocals you might expect. But a lot of Cather's stuff has the structure and music of power violence. True, they are no Infest. I am just saying they are more than just a bat to the head that most grind comes off as. There songs have a good structure of relevant breakdowns and heavy tones—sometimes you can even understand the vocals. This CD chronicles the 21 songs they released between 1999 and 2003 from their various 7"s onto one CD. LO (Civilisation Recs./Parkstr. 39/89312 Günzburg/Germany)

CAUSTIC CHRIST • Can't Relate LP

After a couple 7"s projects, Caustic Christ comes back with this LP full of hard hitting hardcore. Caustic Christ plays classically styled stuff; it is basic, raw, and very appealing. With a quick tempo and a heavy backbone, these songs have a lot of personality. The vocals are pushed to the foreground and the subject matter turns more political, more message driven. These songs are tight and crisp. "I Infect" and "Fratboy" give you a good dose of solid thrashing and heavy harshing. Old school fans will no doubt give their Flipper cover a nod. This LP has all the elements that people really dig on right now: classic style, new energy, and a shout out to the past. Thumbs up from me. LO (Havoc Recs./PO Box 8585/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

CROSSFACE • Red Line Cross CD

Another great release from HG:Fact. CrossFace plays high-energy punk hardcore like only the Japanese can play. Great musicianship, awesome guitar and bass sound, and right on drums. Fans of Japanese hardcore and punk will absolutely eat this up. The lyrics lose a bit in the translation but you can still get the point. If bands like Evance or Assfort get you going and check out CrossFace. CF (HG:Fact/Nakano Shinbashi-M 105/Yayoi-Cho 2-7-15/Nakano/Tokyo 164-0013/Japan)

CRUCIAL UNIT • These Colors Get The Runs CD

As if in an attempt to bludgeon us with the indistinctive obviousness of their name, one is easily lead to expect what this release suggests: a closed book of routine banality. Crucial Unit is a second-tier thrash outfit from Pittsburgh, with a sound laden in gagging-poodle vocals and frustrating gang backup's atop noodley eighties speed metal licks. In most instances they seem to be throwing together riffs out of left field with little assertion and undercut the brutality with often predictable, embarrassingly-obvious compositions that prevent them from ingraining a single memorable song in the listener's wandering mind. From the sounds of this, the band seems to have had a blast recording in the studio, but one must remember that Pittsburgh is a city that's a wasteland for a reason. This CD also includes their side of a split LP with Municipal Waste. MM (Six Weeks/225 Lincoln Ave./Cotai, CA 94931)

CHELSEY • CDep

One of the members of this band plays the organ. Need I say more about the sound? Indie rock indeed. The softest, sweetest, easiest to rock to variety. Chelsey gives you three songs that are honest, loving, and to the point. They are have a pleasing structure, are well played, and feel very real. Based on a Promise Ring popularized style, it gets harder and harder for me to associate this sound with hardcore underground. In the US, this genre has really gone off on its own. (And the punks here mock it like nobody's business.) In Europe and Japan, bands play this style and still make themselves a viable section of the DIY underground. LO (Benihana Recs./Amalienstr. 10/38114 Braunschweig/Germany)

CRUSH MY CALM • Lies Make Life Easier LP

Ten tracks. Formerly known as Blue Water Boy, this band has come a long way. Starting out as a band firmly dedicated to a mid-nineties emo sound, playing drawn out emotive anthems of epic proportions, they've become much snappier, harder, and aggressive over time. I guess that's what happens when you listen to *Tear It Up* and *Carry On* a lot. To me they still sound like an emo band covering Bridge Nine bands, but I mean that as a compliment. You can't take the emo out of the kids, even if you beat them with a stick; the harmonies are there, nothing they can do about it. I don't think Kiki's vocals ever sounded better than on this recording. They're tight and raspy like a sand paper condom, delivering the right kind of kick for this type of sound. Too bad he moved up north and forced the band to split up. They were definitely one of Switzerland's best and will be sadly missed. MH (Fire Walk With Me/PO Box 65/1110 Vienna/Austria)



CEREBUS SHOAL • Chamming The Knoblessone CD

I don't know how many drugs you have to do to come up with this music, or to even understand it, but I don't believe I will ever do that much shit. That's not to say you can't enjoy it though. Cerebus Shoal have always been a captivating band, to say the least, and Chamming The Knoblessone is no exception. Seven tracks in all, overflowing with chaos, off timed beats, and an overall eerie and rich climate. If Thurston Moore, The Velvet Underground, and Godspeed You Black Emperor lived in an apartment building together, they would pay their rent with these sounds, and the landlord would be pleased as punch. The fourth track on the disc "A Paranoid Home Companion", an intermission of sorts, is a six minute interview with an alien. I think confirmation that something is wrong with the water in Maine. The Shoal have done it again, and I like it! The only thing that could make this album better is if it inspired someone to make up a sex move called chamming the knoblessone. MAH (North East Indie/PO Box 10215/Portland, ME 04104)

CRESTFALLEN • Backlashed CD

I always find it hard to review music that is made by friends, so this should be pretty fucking easy. Crestfallen are four dirty, long haired sixteen year olds and a bass player, who I think is their dad. This five song EP is fast, pissed off punk rock. The driving, energetic forces of Behead The Prophet and Guyana Punch Line mixed with the grit of From Ashes Rise. With the exception of the 5 second sing along "Sucker Punks Fuck Off," whose wit doesn't do it for me, this record is pretty damn sweet. Two slightly hidden tracks feature covers by Minor Threat and The Cramps with guest vocals from Chris of Nit Pic and Andy of Reactor #7. I am guessing they put these classic tunes on here so some members could trick you into thinking they were older, and others could trick themselves into thinking they were younger. MAH (Robotic Empire/PO Box 4211/Richmond, VA 23220)

THE CASKET LOTTERY • Possibles And Maybes CD

How in the world these things pass under the radar of a supposed hardcore 'zine is stupefying. The curious naivete of any unfortunate soul subjected to these sing-songy emo hacks should really count their blessings that they thankfully broke up (and not soon enough, I might add). Fortunately with all their material being on one convenient discography, with a quick flick of the wrist I was able to chuck this in the garbage in a single bound. MM (Second Nature Records/PO Box 413084/Kansas City, MO 64141)

CLANN ZU • Rua CD

Ten Irish folk influenced protest/rock (punk?) songs from this Irish(?) Australian quintet. Clann Zu incorporates strong percussion (at points almost tribal), violin (sometimes subtly in the mix/other times strikingly, but always present), sparse keyboards, guitar, bass and a male vocalist, who has a very powerful (sometime overpowering), and dynamic range (sometimes sounding distinctly Irish, but mostly not). The vocalist hits his mark on "Everyday," an intense song about losing a loved one, but I prefer his more controlled style on "All That You've Ever Known" which is very reminiscent of Brendan Perry (of Dead Can Dance). Fittingly, this song is also my favorite on the album because the lyrics deal with the oppression of the aboriginal people of Australia in a tangible, real way and it works. Much of the remaining lyrical content deals with rising above oppression, using imagery and metaphor which is cliché and ultimately suffers even more from compounded redundancy. "We'll rise in to the sky/No matter what they try/We'll soar above their fires below." I wanted more meaningful and direct political lyrics. Instead, they gradually turned more poetic and the songs themselves became too long and less interesting. I think Rua would have worked better as an EP. PK (G 7 Welcoming Committee/PO Box 27006/360 Main St. Concourse/Winnipeg, MB/R3C 4T3/Canada)

CAMARO CROTCH • discography 3x12"

Inside the hand screened paper bag cover you have three "picture disc" LPs. Now, when this band says they have a triple LP/picture disc as their discography, you need to know that 5 of the 6 sides have large color copies glued to them. There is only one side of a 12" that has music (or anything you could play)—and it plays from the inside out. The other ones just have strange, posed pictures of the band's members being wacky. Hardy har har, dudes. This band was around for about 7 months, so the discography consists of a live set and 2 demos. As you can imagine, the quality of the recordings is impeccable. The insert gives you information about how long the band existed, who they were, and who they thank. They don't bother to explain any of the lyrics that go screeching by. Their sound is true chaos. Frantic vocals, fast drums, and fuzzed out guitar. It sounds like these guys listen to a lot of Jenny Piccolo and a lot of screamo. This release is limited to 100 copies. LO (Stickfigure/PO Box 55462/Atlanta, GA 30308)

CLEARING AUTUMN SKIES • Pulses & Matter CD

Misleading name. With great reluctance I put this into the disc player expecting to hear some emo quackery. Instead I was taken aback by some tech metal. Amid all the hammering down, there are some accessible elements (the sing song vocals and spoken word breaks). Not bad for what it is. The music is forceful and solid. They lose me though with the songs that go on too long and the sing songy parts. Shorten the songs and keep it ugly. You'll have a more effective band. MA (State Of Grace/PO Box 8345/Berkely, CA 94707)

THE CLOSE • It's A Secret To Everybody CD

The Close plays tightly knit melodic pop with a somber tone. There are a lot of intriguing elements in these songs, but the low and mellow approach keep me from really being sucked in. I did like the interesting guitar choruses and off beat vocals. The Close reminds me of The Replacements with the way they craft subtle songs that have a lot of potential punch. LO (moodswingrecords.com)

THE CASSETTES • O'er The Mountain CD

Ten tracks of despondent yet addictive indie rock with a few twists and turns. The Cassettes put their best foot forward with the opening track of O'er The Mountain, a twangy little number called June Bugs. This song must have been written with sunny days and front porches in mind. Slide guitar coupled with steady picking and soothing vocals. Things pick up with "Feel At Home," as they plug in their instruments, and add a slight hint of fuzz. The majority of this album is on the upbeat side, like the happier My Morning Jacket stuff or The Anniversary material from the split with Superdrag. All in all a damn good album. MAH (Alice Rees./Via Campana 7/10125 Torino/Italy)

COUNTDOWN TO PUTSCH • Interventions In... CDx2

Interventions In Hegemony is yet another great release for Countdown To Putsch. As with their other releases they are bringing together jazz and hardcore to create a statement of protest and outcry. Their songs are politically charged, and their releases strive to inform and inspire while at the same time remaining entertaining. This double CD release captures all of that. Unfortunately it seems that Countdown to Putsch has yet to find their audience. Their creative process has yet to be noticed by the hardcore scene that spawned them. Perhaps the music is too odd, too foreign, or perhaps the message is too literate, too direct, too obvious. None of their releases have really caught on. I hope that this will be the release that captures a larger percentage of the collective independent music community's attention, but I won't hold my breath waiting for the hordes to start clamoring over Countdown To Putsch. In any event, this is a solid release with content that is smart, clever and passionate set to a musical score that is experimental, interesting, and forging new ground. Don't let this band slip under your radar. KM (Crimethink/PO Box 2133/Greensboro, NC 27402)

CAPITAL SCUM • Freak Show 7"

I think that just by reading the name and title you've probably already decided whether or not you're interested in this. They're from Belgium, but it sounds kinda like Boston, like Slapshot or something. It definitely has that tough attitude and those same kind of gruff and structured vocals. But then sometimes the vocals remind me of Ludo from Labyrinth. Think tough. Songs like "Scene Of Discontent," "Artificial Pain," and "Mr. Alcohol!" just to name a few. FIL (RockNRoll Radio/Oosthamsesteenweg 129/3581 Beverlo-Beringen/Belgium)

COLDERA • A Study Of Revenge. The Immoral Hate 7"

This record starts with some metallic guitar shit that was going some place that I didn't want to venture. Then it kicks into some pretty upbeat Swedish styled hardcore and surprises the hell out of me. It has a small trace of Tragedy influences, but doesn't come to rely on those to carry the song. The songs have lots of hooks and are melodic while still playing fast. These guys are doing their own thing with these five jams I guess. I bet these guys are ex emo dweebs who recently discovered this kind of fast and balls out hardcore. NW (coldera@hushmail.com)

CRiATURA • Gente Sin Fabricas LP

I was really expecting something different with this one, the cover looks pretty metal. These guys actually play a style of guitar heavy hardcore similar to Light The Fuse And Run, or other Level Plane bands. They have a real punk feel to them. The lyrics are all in Spanish, but they have an English lyric sheet, too. I think the very angry male, and female vocals are what makes this stand out, but the guitar work is pretty interesting too. Just to clarify, this record... ROOOLZZZ!!! AH (Mala Raza/Apdo. 6037/50080 Zaragoza/Spain)

DAKOTA DAKOTA • 7"

What happens when fans of Fugazi get together to jam with fans of Steely Dan? Well, you get three songs, that are quirky with no vocals. These guys should relocate to Bard college, I bet they have the hair cuts necessary. NW (Fudge Sickill Recs./PO Box 7052/Villa Park, IL 60181)

DEATH X DEATH • The Glamour Of Evil CD

Sounds to me like something you'd find in a cut out bin, something left over from the '90s alterna rage. I hate this shit. NW (deathxdeath.com)

DAUGHTERS • Canada Songs 12"

This one sided Daughters 12" showcases their ability to play technical and precise music. With heavy grind and metal influences, these songs are sure to rip you a new one. It seriously beats at your head. This wouldn't hold my attention long were it not that between the intricate guitar work and meticulously designed drums, a convergence of melody and noise makes a fun breakdown that sticks with you. Still, I must admit that Daughters are a little much for me. Their lyrics are pretty out there. Intriguing song titles like "Pants, Meet Shit" and "I Slept With The Daughters And All I Got Was This Lousy Song Written About Me" only entice you to read a bunch of jumbled prose. In the right state of mind, you can make connections, but most of these lyrics are sq disconnected that they just make for an odd juxtaposition to music so masterminded. This 12" comes on blood red, baby blue, and (mine was) butter yellow vinyl. LO (The Electric Human Project/500 S Union St./Wilmington, DE 19805)

DEAD HEROS • 7"

If you're sick of the polished street punk that's pumped out these days you can count on Headache to release the stuff that's raw, tough, and sharp edged. Dead Heros keeps the pace at a mid tempo gait and the style traditional. Stadium back up vocals, good guitar playing, and lyrical portrayals of frustration, class issues, and hitting rock bottom. Took me a couple listens to get into. I hear The Pist crossed with Last Resort. A good mix if you ask me. I imagine these guys sound even better live. MA (Headache Recs./PO Box 204/Midland Park, NJ 07432)

DEAD BY DAWN • LP

This sounds exactly as it should judging from the black and silver cover image of zombies/devils having a party at a graveyard. The fact that Dead By Dawn is from Portland just nails it down further. Dirty, thrashy hardcore, somewhere in between bands like Rorschach and Living In Oblivion. The sound isn't too good and this shit could be played tighter. But that's my only complaint. MH (4914 NE 17th St./Portland, OR 97211)

DEAD LETTER AUCTION • Cancer Of Time CD

This is okay I guess. I can't really stand the vocals, or really even the music. If you like light and fluffy emo/indie rock you might like this. I think the would be even more okay if they took an instrumental space rock turn. Maybe CD (Excursions Into The Abyss/PO Box 50138/Ft. Wayne, IN 46805)

DEAD PEDESTRIANS • In The Streets CD

Another Rodent Popsicle winner... Dead Ped's play oi/streetpunk influenced hardcore. Makes for a good or bad time, depending on how you look at it. If you can appreciate the lyrics: "We don't care/We're the type of people you love to hate/We're alcoholics, drug addicts/We like little girls." Then you will appreciate the "oiioiois," before moshy breaks. CD (Rodent Popsicle/358 Princeton St./East Boston, MA 02128)

DEAD SOIL • Forever The Enemy CD

This is worse than Hatebreed, and I think Hatebreed eats it. I think they eat it long, and I think they eat it hard. Okay, okay... So Hatebreed eats it, and whatever they don't finish, Deadsoil puts in little zip lock baggies and reheats when they get back to Germany. No, its not even that good. I think they just put it in their pockets, and then suck it out of their pants with straws. This CD is not good. MAH (Poison Free Recs./Quettingenstr. 187E/51381 Leverkusen/Germany)

DEAR DIARY I SEEM TO BE DEAD • CD

Six songs of strained emotional hardcore with a harsh edge fill this CD. Dear Diary I Seem To Be Dead gives you chaos as well as long stretches of melody. I really like their edginess, it reminds me of Reversal Of Man. This band, however, tends to keep the sound more focused and clear which allows for a few beautiful moments amidst the madness. Their songs speak strongly to the world that gives us so much pain and confusion; one song in particular deals with the aftermath of sexual assault. There is plenty of crisp music and appealing hooks in this set of songs, so it is nice to see a message that has some bite as well. LO (Dead Tank Recs./2351 Ernest St./Jacksonville, FL 32204)

DEATH COMET CREW • America CD/ep

Death Comet Crew are a group from the early eighties who played a mix of hip hop, electronica, and noise. Most of their songs sound like Herbie Hancock is jamming with Ministry or Run DMC. They are definitely original, though sometimes it is too much mish-mash for me to enjoy. Death Comet Crew seems to be more of an art project than an underground band. Since Troubleman is re-releasing these songs, I have to assume they are a part of a musical movement that influenced many bands. I just don't know anything about that. This CD is a neat four song trip into post modern musical weirdness. LO (Troubleman Unlimited/16 Willow St./Bayonne, NJ 07002)

DEATH TO TYRANTS • CD

Okay, dudes... I think it is cool that you have a hand stamped CD cover. I think it is cool the way you made a 3" CD with that plastic rim that makes it the size of a regular CD. Heck, I'll even give you points for recording with Will "Dr. Goodsex" Dandy. But, seriously, where is the f'n insert??? You have a pocket for an insert, but the only thing in there is a sticker that has: 1) the logo; 2) a band silhouette; 3) a list of who plays what, where you recorded, who mastered the CD, who did the artwork, who put out the CD, and all the pertinent web addresses for those folks. C'mon, guys! No one is going to use the sticker that has all that info on it. If anything, they are going to crop that part off before it goes anywhere. I'm not expecting a sticker for every song, but how about a photocopied version of your lyrics or song titles. Anyway, the music here is instrumental hardcore. You get treated to tracks of moving melody that doesn't go soft. Intricate guitar parts are backed up to long droning moments. Death To Tyrants uses a post hardcore framework to craft songs steeped in modern hardcore elements. With a faster pace and some screechy vocals, this could easily be a chaotic hardcore band. Each song has a defined structure and this is great soundtrack to the task of editing reviews. LO (chernobylmedia.com)

DEL CIELO • Wish And Wait LP

Listening to Wish And Wait is an emotionally exhausting experience. The trio of women that make up Del Cielo have constructed a turbulent collection of beautifully raw songs that dip into their collective well of bad times, bitter thoughts, and somber days. Eloquently crafted, the honest experiences of life lived bleeds through in a touching and affecting way. Sure this could be described as mellow and melodic indie rock, but the powerfully melancholy atmosphere puts Wish And Wait into a more authentic and interesting genera. KM (Golden Brown/1011 S 48th St./Philadelphia, PA 19143)

DIVORCE • 7"

Not what I expected from the cover... Divorce play furious grindcore with an unrelenting tempo. These songs bang and crash together while the vocalists do the low voice/high voice thing. Their lyrics are cryptically strange, so you really can only guess about what any of them might specially be about. For the most part, they explain feelings of despair, frustration, and rage. Divorce are the perfect band for the next Godstomper or Agtochodes split 7". LO (Tsunami Recs./231 Emery Mills Rd./Shapleigh, ME 04076)

DESA • Demonstrates Birth CD

Four songs. To me this sounds like The Promise Ring, but played with more of a punk spirit. The guitars are noisier and so is the recording. Overall it's pretty music, that's not overly annoying. It isn't terribly exciting, either. The second song sounds like Weezer. Oh lordy... I know there's people out there, who'd really like this. I'm not one of them. MH (Substandard/PO Box 310/Berkeley, CA 94701)

DESA • Year In A Red Room CD

Desa are adept at playing poppy punk full of melody and energetic verve. Their lyrics are personal, telling stories of life's moments through short, descriptive passages. I have to admit that I don't always know where their lyrics are going. But the ones about growing older and losing your innocence (a theme I felt ran through many) made some good points. Overall, the Desa sound is a little too slick for me. Their indie rock has a very slick recording, which takes the bite away from any of their heavy moments. LO (Substandard/PO Box 310/Berkeley, CA 94701)

DESPERATE CRY • The Ants Are My Friends CD

Ten songs. The ants are my friends in my pants when I dance. It's probably just me but I would have liked that better for a title. This Austrian band plays slightly moshy, proto-hardcore, like it was played about 10 or 15 years ago. I don't necessarily mean that in a bad way. They remind me of bands like Verbal Assault, Kurort, Seven Sioux and so on. Bands that used to be popular then. I can't really find anything wrong with this, except that it just doesn't make me care very much. They don't stand out from the myriad of other bands out there. Sorry. MH (interstellarrecords.at)

DFA • Defy False Authority CD

First of all, I hate Mike Bukowski's art. It has that same cheap PhotoShop color gradation aesthetic that ruined the entire comic book industry. What's worse, his sense of anatomic proportion and visual conceptualism is markedly off, leading me to deduce that his skills at the art of computer trickery can't outweigh the poor masking of his artistic shortcomings. For this I blame whoever the hell band it was that first decided to hire this guy—thanks! Now he's everywhere! Anyway, DFA plays incredibly fast and perfectly composed metallic thrash anthems that spare little stylistic variance. Without a doubt they certainly know what they're doing, firing off a skull-crushing bullet of a release that stays lodged in your head and leaks your lazy brain out all over the turntable. Listen to this a dozen times and you're still not gonna be able to tell one song from the other, but who fucking cares! A band that's finally caught on to the idea that if you can copy a group like Left For Dead, there's certainly no shame in covering one of their songs. Bravo! MM (Six Weeks/225 Lincoln Ave./Cotai, CA 94931)

THE DISEASE • Dyslexic Experts In Reverse Psychology CD

Featuring ex-members of... Oh, why the hell do you even care. If you took The Faint and beat all the energy and individuality out of them you would get The Disease. And I don't even like The Faint. Oh, okay, there aren't just endless synth songs on here, most of this is spazzy screamo with keyboard breaks and I guess, those songs really aren't half bad (well some of them are). THIS is the band that should be named "Robot With Werewolf Hand" because they kind of do sound like a robot with a werewolf hand, or a neanderthal holding a palm pilot, or a fax machine with moist dangly bits. I don't know what it is about this band that makes me want to write stuff that will make them want to beat me up. They have a song called "Bad Review In Heartattack". How fitting. I haven't been this annoyed with a CD since the Abandoned Hearts Club. MH (Alone Recs./PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

DIVIDE BY ZERO • Mirrors CD

Divide By Zero gives you short and punchy pop punk songs with a nice raw quality. It reminds me so much of the many No Idea records of this same style, I was kind of shocked to see that this band wasn't from Gainesville, Florida. I really liked the way the lyrics deliver interesting personal anecdotes in a fun way. The songs on this CD get under your skin with an appealing rhythm and rocking tempo. This is a fun CD all around. LO (Sinister Label Records/PO Box 1178/LaGrange Park, IL 60526)

DUDOOS • Kogiadaso! Shura-Shu-Shun! CD

This is so cool. Japanese pop-punk, which is super catchy, quirky and weird. There is a huge keyboard element to this, and they even use the different sounds for fun effects on the songs. Very good. The Dudoos are very good at what they do; the songs are intricately arranged and played, and the production is great. Not your typical Sound Pollution band, but I say 100% extra special blend ear candy! CD (Sound Pollution/PO Box 17742/Covington, KY 41017)

DUGONG • Hat Danko CD

Ten jangly pop/rock songs with male vocals. The music stays confined within the formulaic indie rock/pop boundaries, sometimes light and airy, other times crunchy and driving, but mostly predictable. Dugong prove they can play their instruments, but I wanted interesting and dynamic songs. Unfortunate, since the vocalist has a great voice and a lot of potential. Overall his voice is similar to Chris Leo (The Van Pelt/The Lapse) and on those high notes, I can see Craig Wedren (Shudder To Think) or Jeff Hanson (MIJ), which is definitely his strong point. These songs are mainly about the singer pining for girls (no lyric sheet included). No surprise here, since it complements the predictable patterns developed in the music. Dugong need to break out their predictability and find their own groove. They also need to find a better designer for future cover art (someone went overboard on the computer generated layout) and a better name couldn't hurt either. PK (Bombed Out/PO Box 17/Leeds, West Yorkshire/LS8 1UP/UK)

DURGA • Earn Your Red Wings, Mormon? 7"

The Locust influence cannot be ignored. From the title of this record, song titles, keyboard, etc. Granted, Durga are not over the top as The Locust, but upon hearing it you will immediately think of that infamous San Diego band. Anyway, having said that let us look at the music, or listen to it. The songs are mainly mid tempo with occasional forays into speedier realms. An absent guitar allows the bass and synthesizer to dominate the sound. Although when the ungody vocals kick in everything else takes a back seat. Despite the goofy song titles like "Fun Is Buying A Boat" or "Fun Is Underpants" the lyrics convey thoughts on sexism, racism, rape, and economics. MA (Transgalactic Ladder/PO Box 104/Wilmington, CA 90748)

ED GEIN • It's A Shame CD

The real Ed Gein, just to name a few highlights, hung decapitated corpses in his house and made a suit out of human skin. While this New York band is not nearly as savage, they still play some pretty heavy shit. Think metallic hardcore like The Dillinger Escape Plan, Converge, and what not. And through this blasting carnival of helter skelter insanity, they manage to do things that the majority of bands in the genre don't: keep a sense of humor, and explain lyrics when they feel its needed. Plus, they cover "Very Ape" by Nirvana which is pretty fucking sweet. MAH (Hex/201 N Maple Ln./North Syracuse, NY 13212)

ELEKTROLOCHMANN • Whatever The Occasion CD

Elektrolochmann will lull you into a mellow state and get you stuck in the groove they dole out. The songs here are nicely balanced, low, smooth, and sultry. The notes seem to drip from the instruments as the vocals soothe you. However, this is not boring. The textures they put into the sound are captivating. Aptly constructed and well played, Elektrolochmann have something nice to share. LO (TransSolarRecords.de)

THE ENABLERS • Sweet Fuck All CD

I've got news for the record industry... Nirvana is dead. I wish copies of copies would die also. Six songs that are disgusting in every way shape and form. NW (Newest Industry/Unit 100/61 Wellfield Rd./Cardiff/CF24 3DG/United Kingdom)

THE ENERGY • CD

The Energy plays fairly rocking melodic emo-punk. Sort of okay. But enough about the music. On the cover you get 72 pictures of the Energy.20 of which are the energy rocking out, 39 of hanging out, 2 posing with skateboards, 1 skateboarding. Yeah. CD (Greenflag Recs./12932 Newport Ave. #4/Tustin, CA 92780)

ENIAC • 7

Basement rock? It's kind of poppy in that indie sort of way. I'm surprised this band isn't from Olympia. Side one is pretty repetitive. Sounds more like a jam rather than a song. It's bouncy and the guitar part is kind of catchy, but stiff. I wasn't surprised to hear Casio sounds here. I could see this being played at pretentious scenerist party when everyone yells, "DANCE PARTY!" The vocal effect makes the singer sound like he is underwater. I can't tell if "Ken and Barbie" is a meaningless song or if it is a feminist outcry about our society. Side two is a little more upbeat with yelled vocals. This side is a little more pleasing to the ear for me. It sounds more like a song. They use a lot of minor chords, which creates a dark sounding melody. I hear a hint of Nation Of Ulysses but maybe this is more for fans of Les Savy Fav and early Faint. Sounds like this could possibly be fun but it's pretty uneventful. Song titles like "Super Friends Are Made Of Gold" are gold! DH (X-Mist/PO Box 1545/72195 Nagold/Germany)

ERASE ERRATA • At Crystal Palace CD

Erase Errata plays new wave. They play it in a classic style, but with a modern sensibility. You can dance to this and you can think to this. It is weird and absorbing. The vocal delivery is so matter of fact, it reminds me of Patti Smith. The subtleties of structure give the power of these song an extra punch. Erase Errata create a fun, quirky sound that is challenging and catchy. This set of songs are the most rocking I have heard from this band so far. Wee! LO (Troubleman Unlimited/16 Willow St./Baton Rouge, LA 70802)

ERPICE • CD

At times Erpice builds a good amount of intensity and momentum in their songs. Unfortunately, those times are a bit few and far between. The rest of the time the songs tend to plod along and, in what seems to be the new trend, go on for far too long. There are some melodic bits, some metal bits and bits that veer off in a vaguely Shotgun direction. The vocals are screamed but not too harshly, their just barely over the line from singing. Overall this is okay, but it tends to just plod along and not go much of anywhere. BH (Autoproduzioni Bastarde c/o Angelo Olive/Via Fratelli Rosselli, 39/72015 Fasano (BR)/Italy)

EVIL ARMY • Conquer Human Life 7"

Okay, the cover art to this is from a really old horror flick that McCoy would prolly be nerdy enough to know. At any rate these guys play some pretty fast hardcore from the Memphis, TN region. Not at all like you'd expect I guess. Just fast hardcore with no gimmicks or heavy influences. All we get are 4 songs here. NW (Contaminated/PO Box 41953/Memphis, TN 38174)

EX MODELS • Zoo Psychology LP

I am at a loss of words to describe this. Well, I'll start with fuckin' cool. This is funky, spastic, and unpredictable noise-funk that keeps me interested the randomness of it all. I even liked the high pitched boy vocals, with the experimental music. This is good. CD (X-Mist/PO Box 1545/72195 Nagold/Germany)

ENDROPHOBIA • 7"

I am not sure where Endrophobia comes from or even if they are an actual band or just a project. They have one song in what I believe to be Spanish and three tracks in English, but the record was recorded in Germany and unless I am mistaken Kelly from Severed Head of State and Detestation is playing bass. The record has been released in the USA on Sound Device and No Options (No Options is the same label that put out the Born Dead 7"). The music is rough, punky sounding hardcore with anti-authoritarian lyrics. It is pretty good and I think the singer's voice is strong and powerful, plus the record design is nice. KM (No Options/1221 28th Street/Oakland, CA 94608)

FACE FIRST • Ignorant Assholes 7"

This record is sort of like old friends with new coke habits. Horrible and gross, but still pretty fun to make jokes about. No reason to buy this. MAH (Rat Town Recs./PO Box 50803/Jax Beach, FL 32240)

FAR FROM BREAKING • The Identity 7"

Whoa!!! Excellent record!!! Traditional youth crew hardcore played with an intensity that is undeniable. The songs are wound up tight and ready to explode once the first chord is struck. Speedy to mid tempo attacks backed up by rumbling percussion (this drummer is great—seriously!), twin guitars, and strong vocals. The lyrics are the usual fare, but delivered with conviction. I seriously can not stop playing this record. It's so good... Er, make that great... Er, make that awesome! I hope there's more on the way. How about an album next time around? MA (Youngblood/PO Box 236/Ephrata, PA 17522)

FAT ASS • We Have Come For Your Mothers CD

Fat Ass gives you thirteen songs of bar punk rock. With songs about drinking and causing trouble, Fat Ass has a piss and vinegar attitude that fits the music well. Their sound is down and dirty as they fuse rock and blues influences together in their songs. A quick tempo and a fresh take on the genre gives this CD a good energy. LO (Diaphragm Recs./PO Box 10388/Columbus, OH 43201)

FIND HIM AND KILL HIM • We Know 7"

Finally, a band from San Diego to be stoked about. There hasn't been one of those in a long time. Find Him And Kill Him plays raw, thrashing hardcore in the vein of Life's Halt. They don't pull any punches or have any tricks, they just rock out and give it all they have. Some of their songs are similar to the energetic negi-core stuff that comes out on the East Coast (like Cut The Shit or The Rites), but without being such a bummer. I really like the honest attitude and clear headed lyrics. These guys seems totally right on... AND they have sing-alongs. Is there anything better? LO (Slaves To Darkness Recs./no address)

FIND HIM AND KILL HIM • Cut Them To Pieces CD

Thirteen more songs from the band that brought you "Can't Fuck With The Kids." They don't waste any time here, this whole thing is over in ten minutes, but they definitely get their point across. They're fucking pissed off. The lyrics and vocals are refreshingly blunt which is easily my favorite part of this record. Actually my favorite part is that in the span of 11 songs he manages to use the word "fuck" at least 40 times. Seriously, I fucking counted. The music is pretty straightforward thrash, but then I hear some youth crew in it, too. With sing-a-long parts like "I don't give a fuck" and "punk is forever" they must get mobbed at shows. I saw them play here once and they were pretty intense. One thing that makes a huge difference to me is when a band doesn't waste time between songs and they kept it short even when briefly explaining the next song. The only thing that I don't like about this is that the artwork and layout are all pretty fucking boring. It's just a bunch of severed bloody limbs and stuff, but that's just a minor complaint. FIL (Happy Couples Never Last/PO Box 36997/Indianapolis, IN 46236)

FIFTH HOUR HERO • Scattered Sentences CD

I saw FHH this last summer and this CD does not sound like what I remember. When they played, they seemed to be more rough and rocking, but this stuff is super poppy. Too many melodies, octave chords, and vocal harmonizing. I'm blushing. I feel like I need a piece of bubble gum and all my best friends to come ride in a convertible with me. Sounds like a soundtrack to a bad "coming of age" movie. But, I'm torn because the lyrics seem very heartfelt—semi political/personal. They are very well written and I think that is what I like most, but I just can't listen to the whole thing. DH (No Idea/PO Box 14636/Gainesville, FL 32604)

FIVE STARS FOR FAILURE • discography CD

The packaging and sound of this displays a very heavy Maximilian Colby influence. The sound is of the late '90s screamy emo variety exemplified by the aforementioned band. The whole key to this style is in building up a certain amount of intensity, and FSFF pulls it off on some songs well while on others things fall a bit flat. The lyrics are somewhat abstract and opaque, another staple of the genre. Overall this is pretty good, if a bit derivative. BH (Matt Reily/1603 S Crescent Blvd./Tartley, PA 19067)

FOR THE DAY • Sofa So Good CD

There's been a spate of bands lately that are drawing heavily from the Jawbreaker and Leatherface sound(s). For The Day wear those influences proudly on their sleeve. Marc Treude sound a hell of a lot like Blake Schwarzenbach. Even the lyric style. The actual music is a perfect blend of the two previously mentioned bands. Tuneful and driving punkish pop rock with strong guitar work and rhythm section that effectively gets the songs into your subconscious. "Insurance" is my favorite cut here. Largely mid tempo with some choppy and quick parts, but everything is built around a really nice guitar line and good bass rhythm. The sort of music for summers gone by. MA (Rockstar Res./Verbindungstr. 9/52080 Aachen/Germany)

FIYA • Room For One More 7"

Four more songs from these posi-punk kids from Gainesville. This picks up right where the last 7" (or demo) left off and it's just as raw and driving. The thing that I really like about this band is that their songs have a sense of urgency the way they move hurriedly from part to part and then it's over without wasting any time. I love it when you can read along and the lyrics just go straight through the songs without repeating all the time and then you know the song will end when you run out of words. This time there is one song where it's a little slower and they sing a little more, but it's still short and a nice change. For a crappy dissertation on Gainesville, Florida bands see the Reactionary 3 review in this issue. This is another one of the good ones for a lot of the same reasons. Also, it comes in this four color screened cover, with this crazy 3-eyed-deer-god-volcano-sunset thing on it. FIL (Dead Tank Records/2351 Ernest Street/Jacksonville, FL 32204)

THE FLAMES • 7"

The two songs here are a solid mix of old school rock and roll and punk influenced garage. The tunes are catchy and edgy, with a lot of attitude and pessimistic lyrics throughout. The Flames begin the seven inch with a sound bytes from local news stations. See, after the Great White club fire small clubs and bands got all kinds of shit for packed spaces and (especially) pyrotechnics. The Flames spit fire into the crowd and light their equipment on fire, so naturally the local news was all over them. When pressed on why The Flames don't mend their incendiary ways in the light of recent tragedy, they reply that without the fire they would just be another band. Sad, but true. As someone who isn't much of a fan of the genre, there wasn't much about their sound to set them apart. LO (Vinehill/PO Box 36131/San Jose, CA 95158)

FLAT STANLEY • Here Comes The Dog CD

Flat Stanley features a few members of The Pink Lincolns, who were a Lookout Records band about a decade back. So, it should come as no surprise that this band has an edgy pop punk sound. Flat Stanley are from Florida; that, too, seems like an influence on their sound. Hot Water Music and Samiam styles can be heard throughout this record. It has a good recording, strong sound, and a lot of energy. Those with a romantic feeling towards older pop punk (with an emphasis on punk) would dig this. This CD comes out just at the time Flat Stanley begin their first European tour this November. LO (Ass Card Records/Annenstr. 5/44137 Dortmund/Germany)

FORENSICS • On A Bridge Atop The Heap Of Friends Who... CD

This is heavy, by that I mean tuned down guitar heavy. Its noisy and loud also, it is like the guitar players are intentionally playing through blown amps. For the most parts the drums plod along keeping the heavy beat, but at times things speed up and the songs build a bit of intensity. While all this is going on the vocalist is screaming though even having read the lyrics I'm not sure what the songs are about, there are some references to vultures though. Definitely worth checking out if you're into the heavy stuff. There is also a seven inch version that contains two of the songs that are on this CD. BH (Magic Bullet Records/PO Box 6337/Woodbridge, VA 22195)

FORCE OF CHANGE • In The Shadow Of Leaves CD

Force Of Change is a fun hardcore band brimming with positive messages and rockin' songs. Their sound is upbeat and happy in tone, bordering slightly on pop punk. I enjoyed the heavier tones and melodic guitar that works its way into every song, especially when the vocals bring around some memorable chorus. You can tell they are influenced by the post-core straight edge scene even though their sound is a little different. Force Of Change sings about relationships, life, and hope in a frank and fun manner. LO (Benihana Records/Amalienstr. 10/38114 Braunschweig/Germany)

FRODUS • F-L3773R CD

This is a re-release of one of their early records. Frodus played rockish hardcore kind of like a mix between Milemarker and Shotmaker. There were points where I liked this but much of the time the songs just sort of plodded along and didn't really go anywhere. BH (Magic Bullet Records/PO Box 6337/Woodbridge, VA 22195)

FUCKED UP • Baiting The Public 7"

Fucking punk rock! Raw and no frills, just pure fun! Mid-paced with catchy melodies and an anthem you would love to sing along with, but the lyrics are all jumbled. All you get is what you can make out of the vocals. Strangle layout, but they did have this to say: "If one could teach them to think in a new way they would also live differently." Side B seems like it is the outro to side A. Maybe it is the extension, maybe it is the same song, or maybe they couldn't fit it all into one song. The first side is the anthem and the second is a great instrumental with the occasional outburst of: "It's your fault!" I think they are telling you that if you don't get this record you will miss out! Fists in the air everybody; this is great stuff! DH (Deranged Records/PO Box 543/Station P/Toronto, ON/M5S-2T1/Canada)

GO DOWN FIGHTING • Round 1 CD

Go Down Fighting plays a style of hardcore that seems to only come from Orange County in California or upstate New York. (Well, most of it anyway.) Brutal hardcore full of metal guitar, sing along breakdowns, and tough guy attitude fills this CD. They do a good job at it, too. Go Down Fighting adds another band to the genre that contains bands like Strife and Integrity. So, if you like straight edge style hardcore with a real tough edge, you should check this out. Their songs are about rising against all the things and people that try to bring you down. Delivered harshly, but a positive message for sure. LO (Bloody Knuckles Records/1315 June St. #209/Hollywood, CA 90028)

THE GONE OVERSEAS • Where Do You Want To Go... CD

Another tepid pop rock band that is somehow connected to punk. A complete mystery to me. There's a jillion bands just like this on the commercial airwaves and channels like MTV2 and The Fuse. This is the sort of shit that would appear on the soundtrack for a Hollywood teen movie. You know the type: good looking dorky kid attracted to the good looking popular kid. Wacky hi-jinks ensue as they run from and into each other. Then when the love connection is made The Gone Overseas comes in over the soundtrack. Preferably in the party scene at the end of the movie. Blehhh.... MA (mystupiddream.com/matchpoint)

GENUINE • Bury The Hatchet CD

A discography for a mediocre late '90s straight edge band. The new stuff is pretty good, would have made a good seven inch. Actually only the Excursion LP falls into the boring category. Very angry edge lyrics delivered by the man behind the whole project, Aaron Edge. This is better than that movie he's in. AH (State Of Grace/PO Box 8345/Berkely, CA 94707)

GO GET HIM SURGEONS • LP

This LP has an eclectic mix of harsh hardcore styles. It starts off with fast paced, chaotic hardcore. Then there are sections with lots of precise guitar work, blasting drumbeats, and heavy grindcore vocals. In another song they lay down metal with a funk backbone. This LP ends in a long noise track. Go Get Him Surgeons are sort of all over the place, but they do a decent job of each style they wander into. The whole record is heavy and harsh with dark German lyrics to complement each song. LO (no address)

GONER • How Good We Had It CD

Goner gives you twelve songs filled with melodic pop and college rock. They create this with drums, vocals, bass, and keyboards... but this is pop, not keyboard punk. They seem like a group of folks who have moved into the mellow phase of the punk lives, thus creating music that sounds like and homage to Bob Mould's later projects (like Sugar). It is a great thing to clone, but too many clones make it a hard sell for this reviewer. Luckily, there are a good number of beautiful moments on this CD. Every once in a while a great sarcastic line come through and the song really makes sense. This band is as much about lyrics as they are sound. LO (BiFocal Media/PO Box 50106/Raleigh, NC 27650)

GRAND UNIFIED THEORY • CD

Grand Unify Theory plays a particular style of indie rock. The kind that has cycled through pop to come up with this post punk lightness. There are plenty of bands that play this style, band like Jets To Brazil or Bright Eyes. They fill their song with melancholy stories of life and love. When you really tune into this kind of stuff it just crushes you. Grand Unify Theory have put together a solid CD of songs that float through the air lightly, all the while waiting to stab you in the heart. LO (undetectedplagiarism.com)

HALO PERFECTO • Hospitals In Other Countries LP

Eleven mid-tempo rock songs on this beautifully packaged (Attic Tapes style) record. There's a lot of stuff going on here, both musically, and lyrically which makes for a very difficult review. Each song is its own entity, with dual vocal styles ranging from talking to screaming to singing and mixing altogether at various times, while the music can be slow and plodding, or a bit heavier and rockin' (sometimes with interesting southern rock influences creeping in) or somewhere in between. Lyrically, this record is all over the map too. There's plenty of sarcastic and cynical/political comment strewn throughout, and there are equal amounts of very arty/personal lyrics as well. When I read the lyrics as the music played, I enjoyed this record much better. When I just listened, the music moved along, but it didn't hold my interest as much. That's not to say that *Hospitals In Other Countries* doesn't have its moments. For me, those tend to be the quirkier ones like the repetition of the lyric "I think he kicks cats" on "He's A Clever Boy" (which has a nice arty feel and reminded me of Chris Thompson from Circus Lupus). I would have liked to have heard more singing on this record, especially since Ryan has an amazing voice, which he utilizes more in Rainy Day Regatta. A lot of effort went into this record and that always makes me feel good. After listening to this so much, I would really like to see Halo Perfecto play live, but unless the entire band has relocated to New Orleans, I'm assuming Halo Perfecto have broken up. PK (Harlan/7205 Geronimo/N Little Rock, AR 72116)

HUGS • 12"

This 12" comes on clear vinyl with a large screen print on the front. The picture may be of cute and fuzzy animals, but the music here is bittersweet. Hugs bursts forth with and opening songs full of chaotic screamo intensity. The tweaks of guitar, frenzied building, and wall of energy remind me of bands like Neil Perry, Joshua Fit For Battle, and Orchid. Fans of this genre will no doubt be into this record. Hugs lay down some catchy stuff that is full of pulsing fury. The sing alongs and moments of harmony are nicely raw. Following the creature theme, they origami folded the insert like a swan. I hated to take it apart, knowing full well that it would never be a swan again. Hugs take on a number of social topics with a fresh tone and a sharp mind. I enjoyed their commentary on DIY, sexuality, problems that lie in wait in every class category, and the hope that can turn our lives around. Very nice. LO (Shawn Reed/3206 University Dr. #K4/Cedar Falls, IA 50613)

HERO DISHONEST • Climbing Up On The Way Down 7"

Inside this flimsy as hell cover is a 7" from a band called Hero Dishonest. Thrashy punk stuff that would fit in well about five years ago in Chicago while MK Ultra, Los Crudos, Dangersome, and those band were still playing shows. If your into Tear It Up or the *Possessed To Skate* comp, then you might be into this 7". MAH (Bombed Out/PO Box 17/Leeds, West Yorkshire/LS8 1UP/UK)

HEROS SEVERUM • 7"

This tribute record has Heros Severum playing Patti Smith's "Rock N Roll Nigger" and Missy (Misdemeanor) Elliot's "Get Ur Freak On." Heros Severum does a solid job of playing these songs. The interpretations are not great leaps from the original versions, so they tend to only really reinforce how good the originals are and they fact that you might want to go listen to them now. I don't know much about Heros Severum, aside from the fact that they are a post punk band from Athens so it is hard to compare this experiment with any of their other releases. LO (Two Sheds Music/PO Box 5455/Atlanta, GA 31187)

HE WHO CORRUPTS • Ten Steps To Success CD

Ten steps into insanity.... He Who Corrupts delivers screaming grindcore in eleven movements. This Illinois outfit have ultra fast beats, evilly high pitched vocals, and a punishing metal influence. Every single tone on this is distorted to be faster, heavier, or crazier than a regular thrashing hardcore band would have. He Who Corrupts take their grind to the next level that is totally frantic. Equally strange lyrics leave you wondering who these mad men are. This split release is available on LP and CD. LO (625 Thrashcore/PO Box 423413/San Francisco, CA 94142 or Forge Again Recs./PO Box 146837/Chicago, IL 60614)

THE HUMAN CONDITION • CD

A heavy Rorschach metal influence runs through this, but it also has a melodic side to it. The vocals are screamed in the usual metal-core fashion but the music varies from heavy mosh parts to galloping fast hardcore to mellow melodic with singing. Really it reminds of Bury Me Standing quite a bit though the lyrics do not have the same political bent to them. BH (Coach Recs./8720 Spring Valley Ln./Indianapolis, IN 46231)

HYPATIA • We Move At Light Speed 7"

Like a consciousness asserting itself with the pride of it's undeniable source, Hypatia spills forth the ultimate in Heroin mockery before nose diving into a military styled shouted chorus that finally detonates in melodic oblivion. They seem to be shadowboxing with one too many styles here, certainly more than any focused band can handle in a single life span. Through poorly organized assemblages of texture and emotions, it's easy to assume these songs were recorded in sections and then haphazardly assembled later in Pro Tools. Much like New Jersey's The Scarlet Letter, this band needs to do themselves a favor and just pick a sound and stick to it. MM (Square Of Opposition Records/2935 Fairview St./Bethlehem, PA 18020)

I EXCUSE • Burn The Empty To The Ash CD

This brings to mind Leatherface and Manifesto Jukebox. I enjoy this album, it has all the essential parts to make a great band. They are from Japan, and have English lyrics but they don't seem to translate well. Seem to be about politics and day to day life. JB (Newest Industry/Unit 100/61 Wellfield Rd./Cardiff/CF24 3DG/United Kingdom)

I EXCUSE • ...Is Dead CD

I can't even BEGIN to imagine what goes through people's minds when they decide to still play pop punk in 2003. I categorize this among the many great mysteries of man, creation, and the universe: answers that remain shrouded in infinity, lost somewhere out there in the vastness time, floating forever in this boundless cosmos. How perplexing. MM (Snuffy Smile/4-1-16-201 Daita/Setagaya-Ku/Tokyo 155-0033/Japan)

INTEGRITY • To Die For CD

Air Jordans, construction gloves and violent dancing... Integrity are back and they brought the "hate from '88" with them. Along with this hate they've also brought along quite a bit of mosh metal and more guitar solos than I remember from way back then. What can you say about a band whose official website is www.bringingitback.com, they don't seem to have changed much. They're playing the same mosh metal, granted they are good at it, and singing about the same stuff. BH (deathwish.com)

I SPOKE • Faith In Chaos CD

Starting of with a nice quiet intro on this 6 track 17 minute EP, I Spoke then break into some killer noisy grind. These acoustic interludes make up the few needed breaks, because the rest of the CD is pure mayhem. Thrashing guitars, screamed and spoken voice, it's all here. Also included with this DIY package is some great links for groups such as the Global Action Network, Ontario Public Interest Research Group, and the Toronto Vegetarian Association. I Spoke serves up the short needed grind blast for the week. JG (21 Classic Ave. #285/Toronto, ON/M5S 2Z3/Canada)

IT'S A FUCKING TRAP • CD

Not just a great name, this band is a fucking insane asylum of sound. Screaming vocals, punishing drums, crazy guitar wailing, and an all around demented tempo. Somewhere between screamo and grind It's A Fucking Trap makes music to rip you a new one. I tried to read through the lyric sheet but it too was totally crazed. The font has a leading of what appears to be 3 because the words just overlap in a messy font you can't read. I assume they are personal and sarcastic in many ways. For those open to the mayhem, It's A Fucking Trap have some very energetic songs on this CD. LO (trapsickle@hotmail.com)

IT'S ALL GONE TO HELL • War Journal CD

How original, another war concept record. This time it comes from a group of "edgers." Lots of photos of hand grenades, bullets, and various other military tools super imposed over skinny straight edge guys jumping in the air. These guys really bring on the mosh. I mean mosh by almost never veering from the open E and chugga-chugga-grind, even when they might (for some odd reason) play fast. Oh wait, I can't forget the china symbol and the distortion box vocals that sound way Pantera, dude. NW (Tribunal/PO Box 49322/Greensboro, NC 27419)

I REN DESPERATION • Aldrig Küpt • Aldrig Sild 7"

There is some real good shit on this 7". The first two songs are totally blazing hardcore with a strong edge and nicely layered weight. A heavy guitar and vocal assault get coupled with punishing drums in these two. Totally appealing to the From Ashes Rise crowd as much as the Swedish hardcore crowd. On the second side, they throw in a rock and roll tune about vampires before they go back to the hardcore for the last track. While, the second side is good, the first side of this record is great... so I'll just listen to that one over and over again. I.R.D. features members of Totalitär, Milencolin, and Nine. LO (Bridge/Box 1903/58118 Sweden)

I WOULD SET MYSELF ON FIRE FOR YOU • CD

I Would Set Myself On Fire For You pummels you with strongly crafted songs full of chaos, beauty, energy, and harmony. I really like this. Their song combine a heavy hardcore sound that is influenced by late '90s emo and modern screamo. However, they escape the sometimes irritating aspects of those by having stunning vocals and sections of violin. They lay down a heavy song and then cover it with the most appealing riffs, choruses, and breakdowns... it comes of like a hardcore symphony. Fitting to the sound, this CD comes in a screened cardboard sleeve with a homemade booklet. LO (Stickfigure/PO Box 55462/Atlanta, GA 30308)

KERUM • discography CD

Kerum graduates from the school of Spazz, and as their final project they present a 47 song discography CD. While attending Spazz U., they managed to record a demo, a split 7" with Unholy Grave, a 26 song LP, and some material that went unreleased until now. Even though Kerum followed all the rules (play fast, play short, have a ton of sound clips) they didn't manage to make it onto the dean's list, landing them as just another face in the grindcore yearbook. MAH (PO Box 1098/Belair, MD 21014)

KILL MANNEQUIN • CD

I got to say, this CD really isn't doing much for me. Its pretty much your average "screamo" band with some mushy guitar parts. The Blood Brother-ish sassy vocals and Casio style keyboards, though sparse, still manage to be pretty fucking irritating. This recording lacks the horsepower that I think the band was going for. Better luck next time champs. MAH (kmannequin.tripod.com)

KONTRÖVERS • När Spelreglerna Ändras CD

The last Kontrövers LP I heard was good—this one is really good. They play heavy hardcore that gushes with melody and beats at you with intensity. Reading through the booklet shows you these folks give a shit about their world and have a good amount of points to make. They invite you into the conversation of what they see all around them (inside the scene and out) with the way the songs are written and the notes they have along with them. That rules. And did I mention that is music is good? Well, it is. We are talking the kind of powerful hardcore that influences Tragedy mode. Kontrövers plays the heavy style really well and the energy leaps off this CD. Just listen to songs like "Punkhierarki," "Förätkring," or "Besviken På Allt" to see what I mean. I love it when you get weight and power together inside of a song, not just noise. Very cool. LO (Putrid Filth Conspiracy/Box 7092/20042 Malmö/Sweden)

LUDICRA • Hollow Psalms CD

Excellent disc here. Full on black metal with quick tempos, traditional metal breaks and a cold bleak atmosphere. The musicianship is unbelievable!! The guitar work is great and the drumming... awesome!!! I also like the sequencing of songs. They go from something mid tempo and introspective like "The Final Lamentation" then come out full on with the blazing "Userpent." Really cool breaks in "Heaped Upon Impassive Floors" with the guitar work that has a harmonic atmospheric effect. This is metal done right. By all means pick this up. MA (Life Is Abuse/PO Box 20524/Oakland, CA 94620)

THE LAST CHANCE • CD

The Last Chance plays edgy melodic hardcore with a lot of punch. The style is similar to hardcore bands from New Jersey or Massachusetts that have been bringing back an old school feel to straight up hardcore. At times harmonious, at times rough, The Last Chance gives you a nice balance to rock to. I liked their statements about life in the UK, their local communities, and personal issues because of the straightforward style they are written in. Like the music, it is easy to get a hold on what this band is looking to communicate through their lyrics. LO (Dead And Gone/42 Glover Rd./Totley, Sheffield/S17 4HN/UK)

LEBENDEN TOTEN • Nuclear Flowers 7"

Total fucking distort on this 7". Lebeden Toten plays fierce and fast punk rock played through heavy distortion and lots of feedback. It is a messy, crazy sound that bursts with energy. Pissed off lyrics speak to feelings of frustration with the society and despair for the world. Lebeden Toten play anti-music that is totally musical because the songs are distinct and the melodies can be found under all the spikes. If you can handle all the screeching, you'd probably like it. LO (Wicked Witch Recs./PO Box 3835/1001 AD Amsterdam/The Netherlands)

THE LEVELING • CD

Though this has many elements of metal in the production, and drumming, I find it to be played tight and I think it's well executed. The songs are all lightning fast and most of them don't go to much over a minute. Eleven thick sounding songs that fly right by. NW (Seasick Records/(PO Box 491/Tulsa, OK 74101))

Longball to No-One • The Little Boy Picked Up... CD

Melodic punk, that doesn't do anything for me. I bet Matt Average uses this kind of crap to "romance" his wife. NW (Snuffy Smile/4-1-16-201 Daia/Setagaya-Ku/Tokyo 155-0033/Japan)

LOVE HOPE AND FEAR • Rose CDdep

Metal in disguise of emo, or emo in disguise of metal? Is there a difference? Six rocking jams that immediately made me think about how over saturated "the scene" has become. NW (State Of Grace/PO Box 8345/Berkely, CA 94707)

LOVE LIKE... ELECTROCUTION • CD

Flaccid screamo that quickly dilutes into an excruciatingly directionless nightmare: annoying Blood Brother's-filtered band name spelled out in a cowboy lasso, surrealist song titles like "Tips For Avoiding The Clap: 1. I Wouldn't Piss On A Scorpion If It Was On Fire", with five out of the six members sporting highly contrived comb-overs hairdos. Go ahead and take a wild guess where this is going! Actually, there's a lot going on here, unfortunately nothing in seventeen minutes and twenty two seconds begins to gel for even one palatable moment. Like getting stuck next to some irksome creep who never bathes, all one can do when something stinks this bad is pray for an escape. Mysteriously enough, the opening riffs for both tracks one AND five sound conspicuously lifted from Van Halen's "Hot For Teacher". MM (buildrecords.com)

MODERN MACHINES • Twap! CD

I read the booklet first before I popped in the CD. I really liked their lyrics and their explanations, but I couldn't help being disappointed when I hit play. It's just feel good punk. At its best moments they have a Stench or early Goo Goo Dolls like quality and that's cool. They certainly know how to write a good tune and they get a good sound, too. Yeah, I'm okay with this CD, they seem like a bunch of nice people with good heads on their shoulders. Nothing wrong with that. MH (New Disorder/115 Bartlett St./San Francisco, CA 94110)

MORGAN STORM • CD

Hell, is this Meghan from Copper singing?!? Does anybody know? Morgan Storm's singer is also called Meghan, and she sounds for sure a lot like the lady from Copper. Their music takes its influences from Ashes, Samuel, Junction, and... well... Copper, of course. There is a little annoying metallic influence to Morgan Storm's sound, but I can still handle that. Not so bad at all. CU (\$5 to BC Recs./45 Lincoln Ave./Tuckahoe, NY 10707)

MORSE CODE HEARTBEAT • Paper Cuts CD

Nine tracks. Fuck, what just happened?! I think I just opened the gates to hell and was greeted by a metal beast. I'm not sure, but I think this is what Converge sounds like. Very aggravating and complicated, but, oh what the hell, I'm just going to say it, there are parts here that I actually quite enjoy. I mean they mix up so many different styles that every once in a while they're bound to play a part that I like. Overall far too nervous for an old woman like me. If only they dropped all the metal parts and just rocked. Claustrophobic, wordy lyrics. Angry, guilt-ridden stories of pain and abandonment, some of which I can actually relate to. I've decided that this band is alright. At least they don't thank the "girlfriends" in the credits. You can always tell a shitty band when they don't even bother to put down the names of their womenfolk. MH (Grey Sky Recs./1339 NE Roselawn/Portland, OR 97211)

MY LUCK • Cleaver 7"

Sounds like Chain Of Strength, but played at a faster speed. This is pretty good. The sound is tough and has the fire needed to make this work. Tempo changes, breakdowns, all used to maximum effect. The vocals are great as well. Sort of strained sounding while still forceful. The only thing wrong with this record are the cheesy lyrics to "Caring For Nothing." Other than that this is worth adding to your collection. Comes on orange vinyl. MA (Youngblood/PO Box 236/Ephrata, PA 17522)

MY OWN LIES • Sounds Like An Accident 7"

This is some ass kicking German speed core. Here you get 7 bursts of dark, brooding hardcore. Fucking awesome melancholy thrash, with intelligent personal lyrics, and off the wall song structure and timing. Yes, very good. CD (Hombre Lobo Recs./Postfach 103117/60101 Frankfurt (Main)/Germany)

MAJHAS • Steeping Into Character CD

Majhas acquire influences from numerous points of the heavy music spectrum to construct *Steeping Into Character*, an eleven song opus that feels oh so good. A droning tower of Neurosis covered in a gruff Deadguy tarp, with Converge fist fighting their instruments inside it all. I think this record went on for about an hour, and I could of taken some more. My only complaint: the song "Workman's Comp", where the singer proclaims that he makes this music for "the workingman". Not to nitpick, but women like heavy music too. MAH (Hawthorne Street Recs./PO Box 805353/Chicago, IL 60680)

MALIGNANT TOUMOR • Dawn Of A New Age LP

MT plays a lo-fi version of grind/crust. The music didn't really grab me by the throat or even really get me rocking out to hard like I was expecting from the cover, but still, this band is out playing whatever they want and putting out records. If you like old grind like early Napalm Death or crust like Doom or Destroy then I would suggest this. In my own opinion though some of these riffs are a bit tried and old. The songs are about life in the capitalist world and confronting Nazism and fascism. CF (Insane Society Recs./PO Box 6/50101 Hradec Králové 2/Czech Republic)

THE MISTAKE • Fuck Everything Up 7"

This is raw, pissed, and even tuff too. Energetic hardcore that takes as much from fast old school hardcore as it does from modern chugga-chugga bands. Lyrics attack religious dogma, Babylon, and modern slavery, in a dark personal tone. CD (Prime Directive Recs./PO Box 571/Balboa, CA 92661)

MASSICK • CD

A mix of crust, pop punk, and punk'n'roll. Sounds like a poorly put together compilation. But, oh no, it's just one rotten band for nineteen songs of blah. Contains their 10", 7", and demo. MA (ozon99@hotmail.com)

MIDNIGHT RESURRECTION • Solid Solutions 7"

Wow, this 7" is powerful. Midnight Resurrection are from Japan. These songs attack politics and social bonds with a sharp tongue and with a good dose of the fuck you attitude. Their sound combines all the technical skill of heavy hardcore bands from that country as well as a structured melody. Their songs are tight and punishing, but so well formed you don't just get lost in the noise. It is hard for me to get into all the extra crazy Japanese hardcore bands that have so much technical weight that you have to wade through it all to really hear all the aspects. Not to sound simple minded, but I prefer something easier for me to just listen to. I don't want to deconstruct it. I just want to listen to it and enjoy it. Midnight Resurrection pack a pleasing punch of heavy hardcore that does not go overboard. It is tough as nails, but also really enjoyable. LO (HG:Fact/Nakano Shinbashi-M 105/Yayoi-Cho 2-7-15/Nakano/Tokyo 164-0013/Japan)

MISSOURI LOVES COMPANY • Start The Seduction CD

This band plays style-core punk rock in the vein of late Antioch Arrow. Their songs are dramatically drippy with seductive vocals and off beat sounds. It is done well and their songs have a lot of flair. These seven songs fit well into the new wave/keyboard punk category even though they sound a little different. In general, the sound is more tame and controlled than some of that spastic stuff. Missouri Loves Company is a modern extension of the style core of the mid '90s. LO (LolaRecords.net)

MONOCHROME • Ferro CD

Monochrome are an artful post hardcore band that play inventive melodic music. Their tempos range from slow and mellow to nice and rocking. They never really speed up, they just seem to move forward more and more. These songs are ambient and dreamy; this is only enhanced by the male and female vocals that seems to rest lightly on the tones of music. Monochrome sets a comfortable mood that is good for hanging out and having a cup of tea with. LO (TransSolarRecords.de)

MORSE CODE HEARTBEAT • 7"

Passable, roaring mid-tempo groove metal attack in the standard German/Acme contrivance. Occasional song vocals and clean guitar interludes render this the sort all-bark-and-no-bite falsity that just breezes by you like a train wreck that doesn't leave any irreparable damage. Subject matter touches down on the personal side of inner turmoil and other varying neurotic internal symbolism. My advice: play faster! We need to be distracted by something. MM (Grey Sky Recs./1339 NE Roselawn/Portland, OR 97211)

THE NAIVETE • Truth Is In The Obvious. Beauty In The... CD

What we have here is a well disguised CD-R with some pretty interesting tech metal guitar played over otherwise dull music. For some reason these guys are in quite a rush to get things done with, playing seven songs, most of which don't reach the 60 second mark, in 9 minutes. With the quick-finger, metalish music they're playing, this recording would of made more sense as one 9 minute long song, rather than 7 tracks split up into the same amount of time. The tunes get knocked down like dominos, and before you know it Rev. Shaw Moore shows up to shut shit down, but I am not going to complain. Besides the guitar playing, this record belongs in the trash. MAH (thenaivete@hotmail.com)

NET WEIGHT • LP

This is one of the best bands I've had the pleasure of reviewing in recent times. This is a powerful Spanish 5 piece that play tight, punchy, original hardcore punk that isn't afraid to cover a wide range of emotion. This is some powerful, inspiring stuff, the way it should be. They play from the heart, and the recording is great, so all there energy is there on the vinyl, waiting to be used. This is so fucking rocking. Enough fast to keep me interested, and enough other stuff to keep it from being repetitive. The words are torn from the singers throat in Spanish, and no English translations are provided, but from what I know, the lyrics are politically themed. This kick ass record is gonna teach me Spanish! Check out Net Weight, they rule! CD (Mala Raza/Apdo. 6037/50080 Zaragoza/Spain)

NORTH • Perfect Body Perfect Soul 7"

Even if someone were to put a gun to my head I don't see myself getting back into youtheur hardcore again in this lifetime. So it should come as little surprise at how shocked I am to see that anyone else could ever think any differently. This band however seems less concerned about sweaty boy's club machismo than they do with investigating the inevitable impermanence of existence and focusing their full potential in releasing the cores of their true selves. Ambitious and metaphysical, I was impressed by what they had to say. Unfortunately, as far as the music goes, it's strictly paint-by-numbers set on repeat. MM (Commitment Recs./Klein Munden 38/1393 RI/Nigtevecht/The Netherlands)

... OF DEATH • Build A Bridge And Get Over It CD

Oh no! Another cheeseball promo disclaimer, this one pumping some guy named Greg Norman of Electrolaudio Studios in Chicago. Like we're supposed to be impressed this band went all the way there and didn't record with Steve Albini! Hey whatever, man, it still sounds fucking overproduced to me. That is of course if you can make it past track one. With that annoying-ass shrill singer and overbearing usage of radio frequency samples in between every song, it's amazing the master reels for these recordings weren't immediately jettisoned to space to rid our planet of one-less pointless recording. 'Tis no wonder Albini kept his meat hooks off this—probably couldn't pay him enough! And an ex-

Unruh guy too? Boy, if I was that person I'd definitely consider keeping that shit under wraps. No one likes to be revealed of how low they've plummeted in life. MM (Alone Recs./PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

OCCAM'S RAZOR • Letters From The Slave Auction 7"

I had an idea of what this 7" was going to sound like based on the packaging it was in, which is a manila envelope with a patch sewed onto it, and I was pretty right on with that assumption. Occam's Razor throws their hat in the chaotic and fevered hardcore ring with this 7", but don't have the might to knock out Force Fed Glass, Usurp Synapse, Jeromes Dream, or any of the other bands they were trying to copy. MAH (4267 W Menlo/Fresno, CA 93722)

OPERATION CLIFF CLAVIN • Who Needs Electricity? CD

Nineteen songs, all acoustic. Hmm, these guys have something to do with Disarm and The Devil Is Electric whom I both remember having a "hippie" edge. Well, it doesn't get more hippy than this. It's punk rock campfire music. (Not that there's anything wrong with that.) I'm not sure whether I should congratulate them on being unnaturally happy peace punks or if I should hit them over the head with a stick. You decide. MH (Geekcore Recs./PO Box 145/Hillview, KY 40129)

POPULAR SHAPES • Bikini Style CD

Art punk seems to be all the rage at the moment. Good or bad depends on where you stand and what you listen to. I personally think bands like The Fall, Gang Of Four, Wire, Human Hands, and The Type are brilliant. But today's art punk is very spotty. Most is complete shit Yeah Yeah Yeahs, anyone? Popular Shapes sound like a cross between The Fall and Skull Control. Jerky punchy rhythms, chaotic compositions, vocals that sound like they're being ran through a bullhorn. Yet underneath it all there's an almost tuneful element in the songs. Just check out "Ads On Police Cars" or the following track "Elevator Friends." While these guys bring nothing new to the table they are good. The playing is wound up and there's a certain insanity in the delivery that's undeniable, and the fact that it sounds like they're reigning in the madness makes for all the more interesting listen. MA (On-On Switch Records/PO Box 641122/San Francisco, CA 94164)

PORTRAIT • All My Chances 7"

Is this band still around? I remember listening to them almost ten years ago, so I imagine this must be a repress of this band's 7", since it's on Stickfigure and all. But who knows. This record doesn't come with any info except for the lyrics and the labels address printed on the back of the cover. Anyway, Portrait plays technical screamo hardcore, with nice melodic parts. They do it really well, and they even have a person playing the violin! At least two of these three songs will find their way onto mix tapes I'll make. If you like You & I, you'll love this. ES (Stickfigure Recs./PO Box 55462/Atlanta, GA 30308)

PART II • Weeping, Wailing, And Gnashing Of Teeth 10"

I must be the most obvious person in hardcore. If you played me some early '90s style emo (the kind that used to be on compilations like the Ghost double 7"), do you think I would like it? No, I would LOVE it!!! Just like I love this band in all its disheveled, crappy recording, minor chord, dual vocals glory. Tempo-wise this is medium-paced or even slow for the most part with some emo-grind parts in between. The label flyer says this sounds like You And I, Off Minor, and Yage all rolled into one. Not a bad description at all. They write meandering songs with odd breaks just like Yage does, they have the jazzy, toned down interludes that are typical Off Minor and they have some of the heaviness and weirdness of You And I. A good mix, I say. This is limited to 500 copies. Buy it while you can!! MH (Coldbringer/PO Box 65144/Los Angeles, CA 90065)

PHALANX • LP

This ten song LP from Seattle's Phalanx is sure to please those interested in crusty or political hardcore. The songs are powerful and angry, but with a distinct sense of melody and raspy sang vocals. The dual guitar approach works well, and the vocal work is good, so what more can you ask for from a record like this? The LP comes with a nice poster and a booklet filled with art and lyrics. Not as good as say Nausea or Tragedy or Born Dead, but Phalanx hold their own and offer up an inspired slab of hardcore political punk rock. I liked this record. KM (No Options Records/1221 28th Street/Oakland, CA 94608)

PEARLS & BRASS • CD

If for some reason you just can not get enough of the classic rock, and obviously many people are having a hard time letting go of the stuff, you can throw the Pearls & Brass CD in your customized van's stereo. Blue Cheer never split up, they just morphed into Pearls & Brass. You would never know that people from the Gatecrashers are in this band. MA (Doppelganger Recs./803 St. John St./Allentown, PA 18103)

PRAYER FOR CLEANSING • The Rain In Endless Fall CD

What, did the person who usually reviews the straight edge metal get laid off from HaC this issue? Have I been demoted by the powerful Lisa? I preferred reviewing the fast Japanese, European and sometimes American hardcore. Give me some core, please Lisa. The singer for this band whispers on the second track. Usually I have common sense enough to throw shit like this away, I wish others would also. Straightedge with death metallish vox and more chugga chugga parts to keep kids kick boxing in their sleep. NW (Tribunal/PO Box 49322/Greensboro, NC 27419)

PRETTY FACES • 7"

Pretty Faces are a solid chaotic hardcore band from somewhere on the East Coast. Their sound takes on elements of screamo, synth-core, and traditional punk. I like the fact that they have quirky devices mixed in with the heavy assault of sound. The songs are short which, for a punchy

band hell bent on chaos, is the best length. You get a good dose of noise but not too long to get bored. They can't seem to shorten the song titles however; the first one has fourteen words! LO (TorJohnson.com)

RESIGNED TO FATE • Tragedy Of The Commons 7"

Four songs of politically inspired crust punk here. Resigned To Fate plays in an older style that has heavy distortion and vocals that are either totally straightforward or fully enraged. A lot of their sound harks back to UK crust from the '80s, so I think they are really pushing for a classic style here. Intricate guitar work, tempo change-ups, and a range of different elements within one song show this band is looking to be more than angry and loud. With a better recording this could be wicked, as is it has enough energy to get passed the low-fi sound. LO (1212 Anna St./Denton, TX 76201)

RESPIRA • A Still Silhouette CD

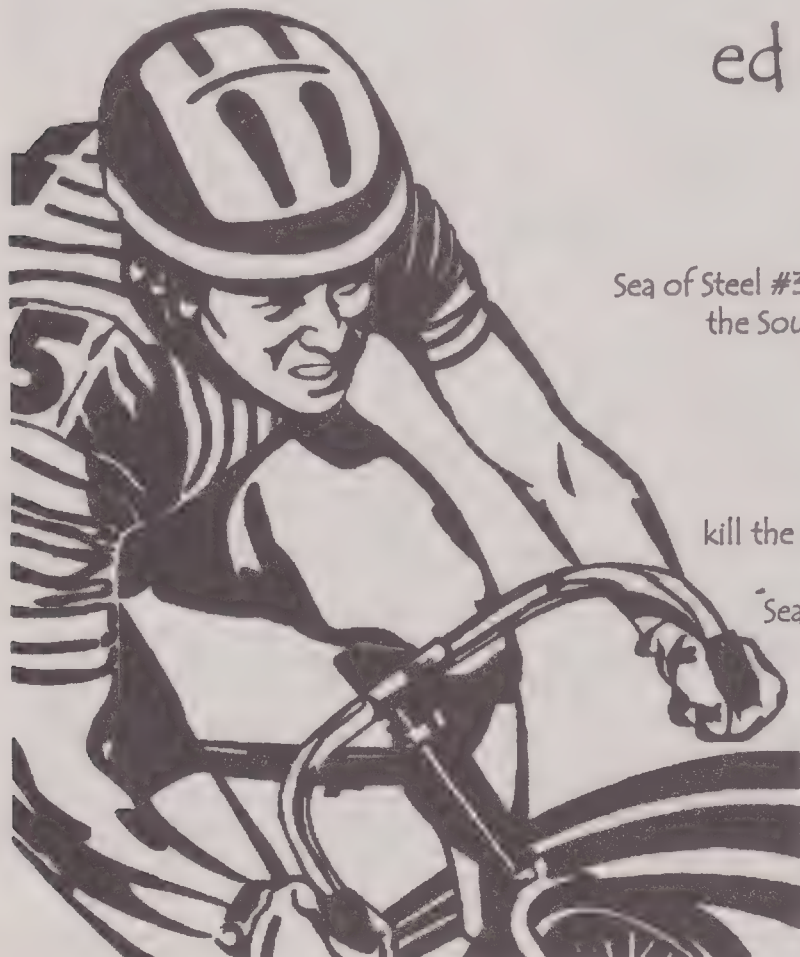
I never thought I'd say that maybe some heavy breakdowns could improve this MTV "emo." This is sooooo boring and overproduced. I don't want to hear this shit anymore. Hey guys send this to Equal Vision they'll probably love it. Oh yeah, no lyrics. JB (exoticfever.com)

RAZOR'S EDGE • Thrash March 7"

Some of you might be familiar with Razor's Edge from their tracks on the Mosh Circle Jerk Punks LP on 625. If so, you'd probably also recognize the fun artwork from that LP playing a role on this record. This particular 7" is a re-release of one that came out in 1998. Razor's Edge has a typically crazed Japanese thrash sound that is crisp and wacky. They've got "blitzkreig thrash" written all over this record and that description fits them pretty well. The sound blurs out in short spurts of noise, structured by fierce drumming and guitar blasts. Crazy, but not hectic, Razor's Edge thrashes hard. Thrash for life, thrash for death, thrash for fun. LO (Busted Heads/Box 275/90106 Umea/Sweden)

REMI B. GOD • O.D. The Album CD

They say never judge a book by its cover. That must go for CDs as well... Based on the cover art of Remi B. God's O.D. The Album, which is nothing more than a creepy picture of a Jack Black-esque dude in front of an American flag, exercising every weird muscle in his face, I thought this was going to be the most god awful collection of music ever. In actuality, it's probably the best thing I got to review this time around. Disheveled and uncontrolled rock and fucking roll, without a hint of honor for order. Imagine The Dwarves falling over their amps, while belting out some covers of The Stones or The Stooges (two groups who are actually covered on this album), a feedback eruption pouring through the room, lights bulbs bursting from the absurdity of it all. Remi B. God eat The White Stripes and The Strokes for breakfast (at 2PM) and never look back. And they are the only band in this review whose name doesn't start off with "The". MAH (God Worldwide/PO Box 858/Warrensburg, MO 64093)



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REACTIONARY 3 • 7"

For me, when it comes to bands from Gainesville, I've noticed that there seems to be this huge inverse relationship between good bands and good recordings. I mean, I guess I always favor the raw recordings, but for some reason I seem to notice it a lot with bands from this town. It seems like I'll hear a band like this, which sounds like it was recorded in a bedroom and I'll be totally inspired. Then I'll hear something like the new Small Brown Bike at work or something and get totally depressed. Like how those Against Me! songs sounded so good on the 7 inches and then all of a sudden they're re-recorded for the LP and they just sound like the radio and get compared to Dropkick Murphy's and shit. Anyway, I guess that's besides the point, but the point is that this is one of the good ones. It's raw and it's fun and it's totally hands on. Psychedelic, rainbow screened covers and cut and paste inserts with sloppy handwriting. It all just works together and says "hey, we like this shit." It was the sing-a-longs in "Rose's Mohawk" that totally floored me. Come play my house in Goleta. FIL (Travis/Obiscure Press/PO Box 13077/Gainesville, FL 32604)

RANDY • Cheater 7"

In these three songs, Randy give you poppy rock and roll with a lot of attitude. Their songs are comprised of melodic guitar fed through distortion, an ass shaking drum beat, and gritty vocals. The dirty quality to these songs makes them really appealing to me. I like structured rock and roll when it is played through the punks vision. Randy's sound is classic and fun. LO (Busted Heads/Box 275/90106 Umeå/Sweden)

RIFLES AT RECESS • To Whisper In Tongues CD

When I first pushed play on this Rifles At Recess disc, I thought "Oh shit, another generic metal CD." And while the 10 tracks on this CD do lean in that direction at times with the dual guitar stuff, the songs switch gears enough to keep from falling in that genre. The heavy guitar riffs along with the killer spoken, screamed, and guttural vocals allow this CD to touch thrash and metallic hardcore, along with a little melody thrown in to keep it all interesting. I definitely liked some of the kick ass mosh sections in a few of the songs which actually make this a pretty heavy CD. Lyrics deal with the painful subject of sexual abuse, deceit, and relationships. All this along with a high quality recording make for a great CD. Oh, and on the last track, let it play because there is some cool stuff at the end. JG (Tribunal/PO Box 49322/Greensboro, NC 27419)

ROBOT HAS WEREWOLF HANDS • The "Endless" CD

The other day I was hanging out with an extremely famous punk rock super star and we were making fun of screamo bands (not bothered by the fact that we're playing in emo bands ourselves), when he came out with "Robot Has Werewolf Hand," a name so quintessentially dumbass screamo that I thought he'd made it up for sure. Little did I know that there really is a band by that name. So, when I got this CD in the mail it just totally cracked me up. However, and I'm a little sad to report it, this band here doesn't even do screamo. They play really tight, really pissed, fast hardcore with awesome screamed female/male vocals. Over time these songs tend to blend into each other, probably because they all have the same kind of drive. That's my only complaint, though. I can certainly appreciate their energy and their smart lyrics, even with a name like that. Well done. MH (robotohaswerewolfhand.cjb.net)

ROCKETS RED GLARE • Moonlight Desires CD

Hailing from Canada, Rockets Red Glare sounds like they could be from San Diego or maybe even the DC area. Maybe call this 6 track CD maybe post punk math rock with a bit of a jazz feel to it. Being that the words are somewhat sparse, this CD could almost be classified as an instrumental disc. Gangling guitars, predominate bass, and complex rhythms make for an involving listen while the vocal style gives the music an emotional edge. Rockets Red Glare are a totally refreshing listen with the originality of what they are doing. JG (Blue Skies Turn Black/214 Thronhill/DDO, QC/H9G 1P7/Canada)

ROY • Tacomatose CD

After listening to this CD, I was under the assumption that I didn't like it. I guess I was wrong, because all five tracks from Tacomatose are stuck in my head. Its sort of "radio friendly", but interesting and original enough to keep it off the air waves. I think what's keeping me away from embracing this record are the images of a teen movie (starring people from Dawson's Creek or something like that) I keep getting. Some parts would go perfect in the background during a montage of a recently dumped boy crying over love letters, and standing outside the window of his ex-girlfriends house in the rain. Its really a shame too. What those kids had was magic, but it couldn't have worked out. With her moving to New York City for fashion school next year, and him being a small town boy working in his pop's hardware store and all. Its probably better this way... Anyway, if you like the Weakerthans, buy this record. MAH (Initial/PO Box 17131/Louisville, KY 40217)

RUNNAMUCKS • Of A Different Breed CD

Finally something to be excited about. I love all these guys releases. I've always thought they sounded like Jerry's Kids (my all time favorite band). This album is a bit different then their past releases though. I mean, I still love it. How could I not? It is still fast. They've traded in their signature Boston thrash sound for another Boston sound ... The Freeze is an apparent influence on these guys this time around. Fourteen songs that I could listen to all day everyday. These guys are one of the few decent things about Florida. NW (Six Weeks/225 Lincoln Ave./Cotai, CA 94931)

SKYLINE AWAKE • Fight Your Route Of Identity CD

They have potential for a future in mainstream rock. Less vocals, more rock would be a major improvement. Comparable to Boy Sets Fire mixed with Fairweather. Every song is a little different, some is good, some is too poppy—that's all. JB (Rosewater/PO Box 30/Riverdale, MD 20738)

SCARRED FOR LIFE • Is This The Price Of Freedom? 7"

Without a doubt one of the best bands going in Southern California. Scarred For Life cranks out sonic d-beat/Scandinavian hardcore punk set at a flailing intensity. Each song exploded with fury and a dual guitar attack to pin the casual listener against the wall. Seven salvos against war, the state and all its trappings. Would be a wise decision to pick this up. MA (Despotec Recs./PO Box 832/Long Beach, CA 90801)

SCHMERZ • Totes Metall CD

Emotional Germans screaming and yelling over hardcore music. (About what I do not know, for I am below proficient in the realm of the German language.) I can say that I like the girl's angry screams a lot; I like the different tempos of the CD and the unique guitar riffs. If you like Momneto Mori check this CD out. Schmerz play hectic music that is all over the place. The music is very well performed and has a lot of original style. Keep it real. CF (Sandra Peter/Taunusstr. 25/60329 Frankfurt/Germany)

SCHOOL FOR HEROES • Listen CD

Pseudo-death metal chuggery offset with clean Dave Matthew's Band bellying. Instead of coming with a lyric booklet, this band ought to just go ahead and include a \$10 bill in each CD to ensure what the title suggests might actually happen. MM (Tribunal/PO Box 49322/Greensboro, NC 27419)

SCROG • discography CD

I remember some years back picking up a 7" of Scrog although I can't remember the label. For some reason, at that time, I just was not into the slow-core stuff. Well shit, the times have sure changed. I am digging this stuff now. With 18 tracks at just under 80 minutes, this CD collects all Scrog's 7"s, EPs, and all the comp stuff on one disc. One of the problems I always had with this genre of music was the tendency for it to get a bit boring. Well Scrog's change of tempos and added melody change that idea. Think ultra heavy Sabbath riff-o-mania with screamed/spoken voice. Even though Scrog has long been history, this was almost refreshing to hear. Also benefits with max volume. JG (New Granada Recs./PO Box 291044/Tampa, FL 33687)

SCURVY DOGS • It's All Gonna End LP

San Francisco's Scurvy Dogs plays heavy punk in a style that seemed more prevalent a decade ago. It is intense and fierce, but doesn't loose and melody to the noise. Instead, they craft songs that are punk rockers with a lot of piss and vinegar throughout. Their driving tempo and pointed vocals give them a similar feel to Guyana Punch Line (though not at fast), while some of the heavy guitar moments remind me of Born Dead. I like this record as a whole more than any of the songs individually, even though "Pharmland" has an excellent chorus. LO (inspiredbyangst@hotmail.com)

SHUT THE FUCK UP • Miscerene Existence 7"

Shut The Fuck Up play some fast and frenzied hardcore much like a typical Japanese hardcore band. The guitars are like chainsaws, playing along to some drums that are tight and fast while kinda being indistinguishable. The vox sound like a wild, rabid animal. Not much information here in the record. Seems as though they might be from California though, as they've recorded these six songs at Burnt Ramen. My favorite song title.. "Crank Booger." NW (Third World Recs./no address)

THE SET UP • Tuned To Drop Dead CD

The Set Up gives you unrelenting metal influenced hardcore with a sharp edge. These songs wall in a down tuned tone and generally beat at your ears. The emotional delivery of the personal lyrics add to the heaviness of this release. I enjoyed all the Tragedy-esque melodic breakdowns and precise layering this band throws into the mix. Wicked good. The last track is a Sepultura cover. LO (Action Driver/PO Box 610/Toldeo, OH 43697)

THE SILENT TREATMENT • After Ours CD

Fuckin' shit... Another sorry ass "emo" band. Listen up, Dashboard Confessional are shit, All-American Rejects, or whatever the fuck that rotten ensemble on Doghouse/MCA are called, are complete tripe. All these bands who follow in their footsteps only underscore how shallow and bland this genre of music is. I hope they do get signed. At least then they'll disappear with all the other applicants for the ever popular temp job of being a major label band! MA (Lucid Recs./665 Timber Hill Rd./Deerfield, IL 60015)

THE SKULLS • The Golden Age Of Piracy CD

The title of the CD refers to piracy so one may reasonably expect a pirate motif to run throughout this release. Unfortunately those looking for a pirate fix will go wanting. Excepting one song and one photo in the insert there is nothing to do with pirates here. Instead what one gets is rock-ish punk from Orange County California sung with a British accent. They do a good job at what they're doing but its not really my style, plus the lack of pirate theme was a bit of a let-down. BH (Dr. Strange/PO Box 1058/Alta Loma, CA 91701)

SUBTRACTOZERO • LP

This is Subtractozero's third release on Primary Thoughts, the Oregon based DIY label that have also done records by Robert Blake and Living Under Lies, among others. As for this LP, there's only two songs on here, but two very long songs it is. Subtractozero's sound can best be described as dark and heavy, dreamy and noisy. At times sounding like Amebix, other times they sound like a more crazed Cereberus Shoal. Their use of different instruments are impressive; along with the standard guitar, bass and drums setup, they've also used french horn, saw, tape loops and accordian when they recorded this. It's quite pleasant to listen to, but it just doesn't do much for me. ES (\$9 to Primary Thoughts/PO Box 4995/Portland, OR 97208-4995)

SMALL BROWN BIKE • Nail Yourself To The Ground CD

I really liked the Dead Reckoning LP but, man, this one is a bummer. The songs have a similar structure and haunting quality but the tempo is just a little too slow overall and the downtrodden lyrics just make this CD a downer. Small Brown Bike can play a really good version of that Hot Water Music inspired, harmony filled, and just a little blue hardcore. Normally I am down with melancholy stuff that comes from such an honest point of view. However, this CD tends to be too slick and just too boring. Hardcore fans of this band will probably think I am missing the point and that these songs are musical genius... I just wanted it to end before it ended me. LO (No Idea/PO Box 14636/Gainesville, FL 32604)

SOMETHING ABOUT VAMPIRES & SLUTS • CD

This band seems to know something about keyboards and '80s new wave. They make catchy choruses and freakish beats throughout these seven songs. Too bad their overall sound comes off like a melody of radio hits played by a cover band that thinks they are funny. It all is just too contrived and too steeped new wave you've already heard to really be heard as original. Too bad. A cover of The Cure's "Grinding Halt" only make this problem worse. Something About Vampires And Sluts have their sound down, but that just wasn't enough for me. LO (Copter Crash/PO Box 6095/Hudson, FL 34667)

THE SOUTH • Sick Pits Bro Sesh 7"

Okay, there's a note in here that says "due to the low volume mastering job this EP may skip on your turntable." It then goes on to tell you how to use a dime on the stylus as to make the record not skip. Well, I fucking tried every coin I have, and I still can't tell you what this shit sounds like. I bet it is not worth the time and energy I put into putting coins on and then taking them off my stylus though. This is why they make test pressings you bone heads. NW (Dead Tank Recs./2351 Ernest St./Jacksonville, FL 32204)

SPEAKEASY • Return To Sender CD

Eleven songs of energetic folk punk with twangy guitars, raspy vocals, harmonica, and driving drums and bass. The majority of this album falls in line with bands like Against Me, Rumbleseat, Hot Water Music, and pretty much half of the No Idea sampler CD. I don't think its an album I would go out and buy, but if it was on the juke box at the bar it would definitely get a few of my quarters every visit. Either way, I bet the kids in this band are really fun people to hang out with. If you guys are ever in Delaware, we should jam. MAH (Innocent When You Dream/PO Box 20897/Oakland, CA 94620)

THE SPOTLIGHT SYNDICATE • Forget The Static... CD

The Spotlight Syndicate is a three-piece band from Reno, Nevada that has ex-members of This Computer Kills. They obviously have influences from bands such as The Faint, The Robocop Kraus, The Smiths, The (International) Noise Conspiracy, and many others starting with "The". So if all these "The"-bands get you all wild, then check out The Spotlight Syndicate, and find some screamy new wave indie rock. Really well-done artwork, and a couple of their lyrics are cool too. I am sure Armin from X-Mist will love these guys. And I like them too. CU (Substandard/PO Box 310/Berkeley, CA 94701)

THE SPROUTS • Pins And Glasses 7"

First of all there are 20 songs on this 7". It's short, fast thrash from Japan with a lot of low-fi garage rock attitude. Sometimes they remind me of the Jellyroll Rockheads, but their songs are a lot shorter and they seem frantic to get from song to song. Most of the time the vocals are screamed along just as unintelligibly fast as the music, but sometimes they're a little more snotty. The recording is pretty raw and it sounds almost as if it was recorded live in one take. After hearing this, Julia said she couldn't imagine them being anything other than a band of cartoon rats with mohawks. I can see that. It's fun and fast and good. FIL (Sound Pollution/PO Box 17742/Covington, KY 41017)

ST. ALBIN'S KIDS • Tales Of Late Night Excursions... 3" CD

Pretentious, self-assuming Orchid worship right down to the benign quotations of some dead Existentialist and preposterous usage of song titles like "The Children Of Marx And Coca-Cola" and "Seducing An Outdated Model Of Youth Enragement (Necrophilia! Necrophilia!)." Shocking as it may seem, screamo has never sounded so tired. From what I hear, Will Dandy will soon be filing a lawsuit against this band for libel. Further proof of how most foreign countries just keep fucking up the music America creates. [Oh, Mark, please tell me you are just kidding with that one! - Lisa] MM (Kickstart My Heart Recs./PO Box U60/Wollongong University/Wollongong, NSW 2500/Australia)

STOP IT! • CD

I didn't want to label this band post-hardcore; but I just did anyway. I hope it gives you a better idea of what they are doing. It's pretty noisy, the guitars are busy which creates more of a layered sound and it sounds great. Lots of tempo changes, which give a strong emotional feeling with ups and downs. At times, the music made me feel a little sedated, kind of dreamy. Then, they come with a heavier sound reminiscent of Produs. The lyrics are personal and off the wall and the vocals are screamed, yelled and, out of nowhere, there was singing that really fit well. The layout is amazing and the artwork is awesome. Really cool! Good work. There is a LP version from The Perpetual Motion Machine which has a hand-screened version of the artwork. DH (The Perpetual Motion Machine/PO Box 7354/Richmond, VA 23221 or Robotic Empire/PO Box 4211/Richmond, VA 23220)

SUNPOWER • Back To Basics 7"

Sunpower plays short and punchy punk with a lot of energetic melodies thrown in. A few of their songs have an old straight edge feel that is in the

same mood as Instead. Other songs, that are more short and to the point, are, reminiscent of Seein' Red. It is really easy to get into these songs because they have so many familiar elements and sing along choruses to engage you. Sunpower uses the basics to create a very straightforward sound. LO (sun.power@belgacon.net)

TAKEN FROM YOU • That Fading Flower, His Glorious... CD
Taken From You plays melodic and emotive music through the chaotic aggression that is metal core. Their songs are heavy assaults of guitar and gut wrenching vocals. Their mood is dark and dramatic at every turn. They seem to be turning themselves inside out on this recording. Each note, each scream, each beat bursts forth as if it were either ripped out of them or something they could no longer contain inside. LO (Raise The Flag/715 Vintage Circle/Destin, FL 32541)

TANG • This Quietness Booms About On The Walls Like Birds... CD
Quick! Someone get me a translator because I can't tell what the shit that combat title's supposed to fucking mean. Funny too how all these stupid Europeans keep naming their crappy screamo bands after what most American frat guys would use to term the word "coochie." I shit you not, but this band, with full-on sincerity actually sings a chorus that goes: "Just offer your bacon to pay for your sins! Just offer your bacon to pay for your sins!" Ha! And you thought all punks were vegan atheists. Moron! MM (Emulation/1 Bis Rue Du Cure Saint-Etienne/59800 Lille/France)

THANATOS570 • Blood, Sweat, And Broken Strings CD
Mix some mostly posi youth with a tad bit of emo. Yup, bad lyrics is something you'll be guaranteed to have. More songs about shit I can't even imagine anyone caring about. Rhyme heart with part and I guess you have a straightedge song? NW (Kurt Iobst/PO Box 304/New Berlin, PA 17855)

THERE WERE WIRES • Somnambulist CD
There Were Wires presents you with intricate metal core with a lot of drama. These songs are filled with harmony and discord, building and crashing, dark tones and light epiphanies. They do a really excellent of playing new fangled metal harder without sounding overly slick or just plain trite. Reading through the lyrics, it is hard to make heads or tails of many lyrics. Most of them written in such a jumbled poetic manner you get snippets more than themes. I liked the look of the insert, but the handwritten lyrics wedged between two giant heads was hard to read. All in all, people who want to rock like Converge without feeling like such sellouts should look to bands like this, because There Were Wires can fill that void. LO (Iodine/1085 Commonwealth Ave./PMB 318/Boston, MA 02215)

THESE ARMS ARE SNAKES • This Is Meant To... CD
Tuneless and undistinguished ex-girlfriend vendetta/post-whatever schlock with lots of pretty guitar strumming 'neath an over-extended Eddie Vedder making a total mockery of himself. The cover depicts an up-close bleached blonde with over-plucked eyebrows, stewing with her mouth gagged by Christmas lights. Whatever the fuck that's supposed to imply, ironically enough, only wonderfully complements the ludicrousness of their absolutely stupid band name. Another impregnable dud fired off from perhaps the shittiest record label in existence. MM (Jade Tree/2310 Kennwynn Rd./Wilmington, DE 19810)

THEY FOUND MY NAKED CORPSE FACE DOWN IN THE SNOW • Delta India Echo 7"
I understand that when you're playing heavy, screamy, chaotic hardcore that you want a totally brutal name, but this is a bit much. I think you could offer people a shorter alternative at least to use in practical situations. This name doesn't even shorten all that well, so I'm just wondering what the local kids call them. Like if you just wanted to know if a friend was going to the show, even just asking, "Are you going to the They Found My Naked Body show?" is kind of a tongue twister. And using Face Down In The Snow just sounds like a PG version of Face Down In Shit. So my suggestion is to start calling them Corpse Face. Apparently they took part in a week of chaos up in the Bay Area not too long ago and a new band was formed called xI Can't Stop Shittingx, so be on the lookout for them as well. FIL (Grey Sky/1339 NE Roselawn/Portland, OR 97211)

THIRD DEGREE • Six Years Of 666 discography CD
This is a collection of everything this Polish grind band has done. Apparently this band has gone through quite a considerable amount of lineup changes. I really don't know if I would put this into the same category of grind like Nasum or Rotten Sound. I would have to say more like Pignation or Agathocoles. But it still has a grind feel. Even with the wah pedal, weird chugga chugga parts, and very few and short blast beats in the earlier material. I guess this is just glorified crust with the double high and low vocals. It is hard to say because the material changes along with the different various line-ups. Some of the songs even have a weird Slipknot or Nu Metal feel (yes, scary, I know!); maybe it's just an effort at expanding a style that can sound quite repetitive. The best stuff in my opinion is the some of the middle tracks and the latest stuff. If you dig Pignation or early Napalm Death then give this thing a spin. Oh yeah, contains an enhanced video track for your computer. CF (Piotr Paltian/I.L. Kolejowa 15-1/10-284 Olsztyń/Poland)

THREE MINUTE MOVIE • The Film Reflects A... CD
Oh yes indeed, Japanese terrorists are just as likely to attack us with life-ending doses of melodic pop as any bearded middle easterner is willing to do to a New York subway. An atrocity to any listener's ear, after hearing something this awful one can only reflect on the blessing the majority of the world has yet to be tainted by Three Minute Movie's ghastly tyranny. What a brutal and uncompromising regime this band must be. MM (Snuffy Smile/4-1-16-201 Daita/Setagaya-Ku/Tokyo 155-0033/Japan)

TRACER • CD
This band is great! They play upbeat and extremely melodic punk rock, with a singer that sounds like that guy from Sensefield. Music-wise this is more like Reason to Believe though. Or like my all time favorite Canadian band, Two Line Filler. This CD has everything; beautiful singing, fast parts, slow parts, cool bass lines, guitar solos, and even some screaming. When this CD was handed over to me, it came with no info at all, but I've been told this band is from the North Eastern part of Pennsylvania. If they are still around, I don't know. ES (no address)

TRAPDOOR FUCKING EXIT • Devil's Egg CD
This stuff will make you dance. I'm sure the live show is pretty intense. TDE is loud and let me tell you, it's hard to capture this kind of energy on a recording, but they did it! Lots of down stroking guitar riffs, catchy melodies, great guitar tones and a rocking rhythm section. It reminds me of San Diego legends Drive Like Jehu and Hot Snakes, but it's more chaotic. Like I said before, it will make you move. It's fun! It's rock and roll. DH (No Idea/PO Box 14636/Gainesville, FL 32604)

TRUXTON • CD
Oh, I was going to be all mean and say that this is music to shave your ass to, weak-butted pretty boy crap and all that. To make sure that I could properly dis this CD I had to listen to it again. And again. And again. And so, a dozen times later, I no longer hate it so much. If anything I hate myself for not hating it. God, am I complicated, or what? So basically Truxton sounds to me like Engine Down covering The Promise Ring covering Hootie and the Blowfish at a hip club in LA. Okay, so I've never been to a hip club in LA or anywhere else for that matter. It's just such a mellow sound, I'm sure movie stars could bob their heads to and do drugs and have sex in the toilets (as all movie stars do) and not risk messing up their hair. Lots of dynamics, though, beautiful harmonies and well structured songs. The right kind of sound to listen to in the secrecy of your own room. Shit, I really liked this. I'm such a sell-out. MH (Substandard/PO Box 310/Berkeley, CA 94701)

TURUN TAUTI • Tautinen Systeemi CD
This is some rocking crust punk, from Finland. They have good punk songs, a mellow rock jam and a dancehall/ska influenced song. Overall, this was a good listen, with translations for the political lyrics, and good production and layout. CD (Nice Lobotomy Recs./Kurjenmaenkatu 15 H 35/20720 Turku/Finland)

UNDER A DYING SUN • Supernova CD
This record is kind of like a house guest that overstays their welcome. Its fun at first, but eventually you get kind of sick of having them around. Pretty close to every song on this CD has some part that just goes for far too long, until you get to that part things are good. The music varies between melodic rock to jangly, herky-jerky chaos to a heavier metallic feel. The vocalist sings for the most part with the lyrics being of the abstract personal sort. The songs are tight but if they could just cut the song lengths in half and get to the point this could be really good. BH (Substandard Recs./PO Box 310/Berkeley, CA 94701)

USURP SYNAPSE • Disinformation Fix double CD
This band is elusive in fitting them into one genera. A little grind, a little core, a little emotion, and a lot of doom. The later tracks on disc one are much more appealing to me for some reason. I think maybe the band developed their own thing and were going out on a musical limb so to speak. I never had the chance to see this band but I have heard it was quite a thing to behold. This band never could really fit into conventional standards. This band is way better than The Locust any fucking day! This band can capture the essence of a seizure and also some really powerful sweeping emotions at the same time. It seems like this band just cant hold still! The atypical chords and complete lack for conventional drumming standards is mesmerizing! CF (Alone Recs./PO Box 3019/Oswego, NY 13126)

UTAH! • Plays Well With Others CD
Ten mellow/poppy indie rock songs from this 3 or 4(?) piece from Raleigh. All of the songs have personal lyrics, which is fitting for the music, however the lyrics to the last track are not included as well as a few other lines here and there. What sets this band apart, is the addition of the cello, which works well on all of the songs. The more I listened to this record, the more it reminded me of their Chapel Hill neighbors Superchuck, especially their last album *Here's To Shutting Up*. The music on *Plays Well With Others* is fine, although I wish it were more dynamic. However, I can tell Utah! had a great time recording this and their energy definitely comes through. It makes me want to see them live, which is where I'm sure this band excels. My biggest gripe with Utah! is unfortunately the singer's voice. Most of the time, it's too throaty/raspy in an irritating way, but he moves in and out of this style with a mellower nicer singing voice, which I prefer more on these songs. The cello adds some amazing backing vocals on the second track "Yonder." Her vocals barely see the light of day on this record, which is unfortunate. I'd like to see Utah! incorporate her voice more in the future. PK (BiFocal Media/PO Box 50106/Raleigh, NC 27650)

UNPERSONS • III CD
Seems they've replaced some of their darker qualities on their first CD (released on Born To Die) for a far more jagged and sonically eardrum rupturing assault. Loud and crashing songs that go from winding bass lines to almost inhuman chopped drumming. "Last Tear For A Fallen" is at once dizzying and violent with shifting tempos and disparate musical structures pushing against each other. Song after song they create a thick wall of abrasive sound that captures the rage and despair quite well. Another great release from these guys. MA (At A Loss/PO Box 582/Eastlake, CO 80614)

UNPERSONS • III CD
This is some dark and creepy metallic hardcore with plenty of crunch and heaviness. This really good, but I don't know who to compare the sound with. They thank Artimus Pyle, Iron Lung, Teen Cthulu, Kylesa, and Damad, so that should help you figure it out. Technical and metal dark hardcore, with some interesting soft parts, and overall song structure. CD (At A Loss Recordings/PO Box 582/Eastlake, CO 80614)

VIVA CAMEL • CD
Twelve tracks. Guys, please don't send your records to *HeartataCk* with a promo sheet listing your "key selling points!!!" Please! It makes it so much harder to take you seriously. Of course, if you're into Jets To Brazil and The Get Up Kids you will probably really like this CD. It's upbeat and pleasant, delivering all the punch of a drunk 10 year old girl. The lyrics actually show some sort of insight about modern life and are delivered with a somewhat sarcastic attitude. I'm not going to rave about this, but it's still good enough music to drive your car down the autobahn (although some would disagree with me here). I guess, they're not bad at what they're doing. I don't know, if I could put it between my legs and make it vibrate I would probably like it better. MH (Molecular Laboratories/PO Box 791/Frederick, MD 21705)

WARSAWPACK • Stocks & Bombs CD
This is politically motivated, funk/hip hop, with a full band. The music is pretty diverse taking cues from jazz, hip hop, rock and a dose of heaviness wouldn't be bad with this either. Funk material? Could be good. This however, is awesome. Thirteen tracks of rhymes that cut the skin of those invested in the profit (death) machine, the drug war, commercialized sexuality, and the general badness of capitalism. Underneath the CD itself is cool chart that has a bunch of names, and all their connections with different corporations, very incestuous. The layout and artwork are very good, and Warsawpack, bring up the funk with consciousness. CD (G 7 Welcoming Committee/PO Box 27006/360 Main St. Concourse/Winnipeg, MB/R3C 4T3/Canada)

WASTED • Here We Go Again CD
This CD chronicles Wasted's 7" releases from 1998 through 2001, plus there are a couple live tracks and some video. They are fun to listen to because they are so energetic. Wasted mixes melodic hardcore, working class punk, and rock and roll into a great sound. Each track is full of piss and vinegar AND it makes you want to dance. With a classic feel and an original twist, this is seriously good. If you've missed any of their stuff on vinyl, now is your chance to get 29 tracks of pure punk in one place. LO (Combat Rock Industry/Pl 65/11101 Riihimäki/Finland)

WEAVING THE DEATHBAG • Lost In The World 7"
WTD play tight, fast, energetic, and punchy punk rock. All the songs have a quick punk tempo and excellent guitar riffs that remind me that it is okay to have musical style and lyrical sincerity in the world of bland punk and hardcore. The artwork is also really great and fits the mood of the contents inside. The lyrics take cue to the title *Lost In The World* and relate to feelings of... well, feeling lost and alone in this lovely, happy world of puppy dogs and sugarcoted smiles. I had a chance to see these dudes in Portland in October last year and they put on a really great show. If fast punk with good lyrics is your thing, then check out this slab of 7" vinyl. This review is dedicated to the dark lord of hardcore. CF (Born To Die Recs./1904 NW 31st St./Oklahoma City, OK 73118)

WHAT FEEDS THE FIRE • Set Me Free 7"
I really like this seven inch. These guys play great driving and political straight edge hardcore. Musically it is similar to what Strife used to sound like, but more raw, and with more melodies thrown in. The singer is screaming his lungs out about a world of greed, about despair, and about wanting more from life. The cover is nicely done, shaped as a match-box, you know, the flat ones, where you strike the match on the back. Printed with silver ink, this looks even more slick. My only complaint is that there's no info on the band. There's the lyric sheet and a small thank you list, but it doesn't say anywhere who plays in the band or where they are from. These four tracks left me wanting more. ES (Anchor Recs./PO Box 154/3495 Cambie St./Vancouver, BC/V5Z 4R3/Canada)

WHISKEY SUNDAY • CD
The cover art looks like a bottle of Jack Daniels... I don't normally go for this kind of stuff, but Whiskey Sunday puts so much rocking energy into these songs you have to give them props. They play dirty punk with a serious rock and roll edge. Catchy riffs, blistering harmony, and a solid beat are all through this CD. I hear a Misfits influence in a lot of these songs and that makes the dig the "whoas" and "yeahs" more than usual. The only real problem with CD is the song "Wretch." You'd think that in this day and age songs about girls you don't like would at least have a better delivery if you don't want to come off as misogynist. LO (Vinehell/PO Box 36131/San Jose, CA 95158)

WINFRED E. EYE • The Dirt Tier CD
Nine songs of sparsely arranged soulful avant-blues/folk fusion. The most striking thing about this record is the vocals. They are definitely an acquired taste, but also somehow strangely intriguing, even if they are obviously affected. The lyrics are mini-stories seemingly spawned from drug use and dark childhood experiences, which are intertwined with guitar and accented with occasional percussion. The soundtrack to late night summer thunderstorms viewed from a southern rickety porch. PK (Luckyhorse Industries/PO Box 18127/Seattle, WA 98118)

THE VOTE • Vote Me Out CD
The Vote used to be called When In Roam and have some members of Violent Society. They play solid punk with a strong pop punk influence. Their songs are well constructed, catchy, and smart. Their lyrics talk about

a range of personal and political issues that seem to mostly discuss getting older in the modern world. The Vote throws out eleven songs that have a good base in rock and roll, so it is easy to dance around to this CD. LO (Ass Card Recs./Annenster. 5/44137 Dortmund/Germany)

ZONE • Squeezed State CD

Zone plays very rockish hardcore, it reminded me a bit of GBH and a bit of Dead Stool Pigeon. The guitars constantly buzz-saw, the drums keep things moving along and the vocals are rough but not screaming. I couldn't tell you what the songs are about since the vast majority of the lyrics are in Japanese. This is okay, after a while the songs all kind of blend together. BH (HG:Fact/Nakano Shinbashi-M 105/Yayoi-Cho 2-7-15/Nakano/Tokyo 164-0013/Japan)

ZS • CD

This CD contains five tracks of intimate chamber music from this New York City double trio. Instrumentation is two tenor saxophones, two electric guitars, and two drumsets performing four compositions from the sax players and one collective composition. The CD begins with a jumpy track requiring all six to play in lockstep through rhythmic passages of notes and pauses. That format is maintained throughout, as the pieces become evermore subdued. The last track incorporates voices and brings this recording to an ethereal close. SJS (Vothoc c/o Troubleman Unlimited/16 Willow St./Bayonne, NJ 07002)

THE CAR CRASH SLEEP/THE [JUKEBOX] SCENARIO • split 7"

Both of these bands songs were recorded in the first part of 2001. The Car Crash Sleep are a likeable three piece playing slightly chaotic hardcore with a lot of punch. Distorted bass and two singers screaming their guts out make both their songs on this an enjoyable treat. The [Jukebox] Scenario play one song that start off in a slow and quiet fashion, and then builds up to become more noisy and chaotic towards the end. Listening to them made me think of a band like The Hal Al Shedad. ES (Carmen Diablo/PO Box 13036/Valencia 46080/Spain)

CAUSTIC CHRIST/RAMBO • split 7"

This is a good record. Caustic Christ are gaining popularity these days with a sound that is heavy and hard hitting... they sort of remind me of Wolfpack from Sweden. Rambo are up to their usual hijinks. Each band does 3 tracks. Fun stuff. KM (Busted Heads/Box 275/901 06 Umea/Sweden)

SLACKJAW/SCHIFOSI • split 7"

Schifosi play some of the meanest, gruff, and heavy shit I've heard in a while. I was a bit shocked when I looked at the insert and saw that the vocalist was a girl. This shit is inhuman, and sounds like the toughest of the man species. Musically it is biting on Tragedy a bit. Jesus, who isn't these days? Australian crust I gubess. Slackjaw seem to be riding the metallic mosh train to hell. Not my thing, as I've reviewed to much of that style crap this time around. It seems strange to me to put these two bands on the same record. Cool hand screened covers though. NW (Kickstart My Heart Recs./PO Box U60/Wollongong University/Wollongong, NSW 2500/Australia)

TEARS OF GAIA/STATEMENT/ EXTINGUISH • 3 way split 7"

This is a throw back to the militant vegan Earth Crisis days. All the songs are about slitting the throat of this that or the other type of oppressor and proving yourself to have the moral upper hand because of your lifestyle. While I am sure a lot of people reading this magazine can agree with the statements made in the lyrics and insert of this 7" about veganism and straight edge, there is still something condescending about bands who play slayer riffs and wait till the thick breakdowns to scream with all their machoness about the ills of the world. Well, two of the three bands sounds like Trial and one band I think had a mastering problem with the speed, because it all sounds really odd. I wonder if these dudes are down with the Roma Legion. CF (New Eden/PO Box 11055/Costa Mesa, CA 92627)

CINDER/33 AT 45 • split 10"

Cinder: Awesome ppsi core from Spain (I think). This band has got the early Dischord sound down to a tee. Simple tunes played with lots of energy and a sense of humor. You can just picture these guys playing live having a lot of fun. Aggressive vocals, sing-along parts, youthful (not entirely thought out) lyrics, if any of that sounds appealing to you, you would do well to check this out. 33 At 45: This Portuguese band plays a similar style but their sound is just a tiny bit heavier. They got a great, dirty sound, very rough around the edges, just like it's meant to be. The entire record looks and sounds very much like a Youth Attack or 625 release. You might say that they lack in originality, but I think almost every band that plays this style these days does. So what if the Europeans rip off the US rip-offs. In the end it's all about having a good time. Nothing wrong with that. MH (Asperii Recs./PO Box 229/2686-997 Sacavem/Portugal)

ISCARIOTE/COMPLETE • split 7"

Iscairiot, with people from both France and Switzerland, start off this split with a heavy and brutal track. Lots of crunchy guitars, screaming vocals and driving drums and bass. I love the breaks they throw in the middle of their song. They sing in French, I imagine, but the lyrics are also translated to English. On the flipside, Complete from Denmark kick out two tracks of more of a rockish type of hardcore. They too are heavy at times, but add more melodies to their songs. Last time I listened to them was on their split with Lack, but this time around they sound a lot more mature. I would love to see both of these bands rock out in someone's basement or living room. ES (Heroin Records c/o Boris Battistini/CP. 35/47023 Cesena/Italy)

CREAM ABDUL BABAR/KYLESA • split CD

Kylesa are branching out on this one. Their contribution to this split is a four part composition "The Curse Of Lost Days." Think of present day Neurosis with their experimentation with noise and ambient sound scapes, and combine that with the crushing music of Kylesa. The opening song is a semi abrasive semi ambient piece that sets the tone for the remaining three. Dark and apocalyptic. The best part of the four piece epic is the third part which has a great build up before the words kick in that begin bleak but end up on a hopeful note. This is by far my favorite Kylesa release yet. And I hope they continue to explore this direction further. Cream Abdul Babar hold their own quite well. The songs are rife with tension and anger. Thick sound and dark in tone. While still very much along the lines of their previous stuff, there is something different about it. Don't know exactly. Pick it up and hear for yourself. MA (At A Loss/PO Box 582/Eastlake, CO 80614)

KENT BROCKMAN/BIZARRE X • split 7"

Both these bands play an old school style of thrash grind that brings to mind bands like Heresy, Ripcord, and, of course, Napalm Death. I really got into the Bizarre X side. It's way hectic and in your face with screams and growls and in your face drumming. The Kent Brockman side is really good to but all the craziness would feel to me through all the muddiness of the recording. Excellent split though! CF (Hombre Lobo Recs./Postfach 103117/60101 Frankfurt (Main)/Germany)

KENT BROCKMAN/EDORA • split LP

Oh, golly this is very great Germany's, Kent Brockman bring forth a furious melange of hardcore and power violence and a healthy dose of humor and realism in the lyrics. They sound sort of like Spazz. Yes, very ass kicking. Singapore's Edora play a furious style of speedy, chunky, and powerful crust, with some catchy as fuck hooks, and some raging female vocals, backed by equally raging lyrics that are aimed at bigotry of war mongers, realizing harmony and struggling for equality, peace, freedom. This record is a winner for sure. CD (RSR c/o Sandro Gessner/Str. des Friedens 45/07819 Mittlepölnitz/Germany)

XNEMESISX/CPASM • split CD

This CD has 27 songs that track just over 30 minutes. They are all short, grind songs with lots of sound bytes. Each band has a track listing, but they don't say which band starts off the CD so I couldn't figure out which was which. They give you song titles, but no lyrics. So once you're lost, you're lost. The band that goes first has an especially harsh take on grind. Their songs are jumbled with crazy sound bytes and drumming so fast you have to suspect a drum machine. Most of the songs here sound like a werewolf and a drum machine, literally. I think the first is Cpasm. The second band, lets call them xNemesisx, seems to be created entirely of machines. Their sound is a convergence of drum machine, synthesizers/keyboards, and bits of recorded movie lines or other vocals altered through mic effects. There are so many bands doing this, but I don't know anyone who is really into listening to it. Doesn't that speak to something. LO (\$5 to Thrash Disaster/#307-2395 Pembina Hwy./Winnipeg, MB/R3T 2H4/Canada)

PSYCHO SICKNESS/I OBJECT • split CD

You have to hear Psycho Sickness!! I thought it was a new Forward release when this first came over the speakers. This punk outfit from Malaysia sounds heavily influenced by Japanese hardcore punk with perhaps some Conflict influences. The songs have intensity and a near over the top urgency, and yet they can pull off some rock'n'roll riffage in songs like "State Of Fear." Excellent, excellent music from this group. The I Object material is their demo. Stripped down hardcore with a penchant for speed. Every song sounds like it's on the verge of coming apart. They sound like a band who has to put all the equipment back in place after every song. I visualize a drum kit inching further and further away across the floor with every hit, and cabinets rocking back and forth. Good stuff. MA (PO Box 1084/Bufalo, NY 14215)

RATS TO ROBOTS/ TEXTBOOK TRAITORS • split 7"

Rats To Robots plays very chaotic metal. I liked some of it but their over-reliance on blast beats put me off. Textbook Traitors also have a chaotic quality to them, but the drums are left out of it and hold a steady beat. At times this drumming starts to feel like it is plodding along though and can destroy the intensity that they seem to be trying to build and made the song seem longer than it needed to be. Both vocalists scream to an extent but its not too far over the top. RTR have a political bent to their lyrics while TT's song is of a more personal nature. BH (Magic Bullet Recs./PO Box 2370/Merrifield,VA 22116)

DEFIANT TRESSPASS/ COLD LIKE DECEMBER • split 7"

Both of these bands play somewhat sterile, late '80s/early '90s influenced hardcore, in the vein of Turning Point and other sing along hardcore bands. Fairly uninspired, or at least that is how it came across to me. MAH (sofo.fakeindependent.com)

FACE DOWN IN SHIT/ COLD ELECTRIC FIRE • split 10"

Face Down In Shit utilize the all mighty southern sludge riff to crush all pretenders to the throne. A subdued violin lulls the enemy into a state of false security. A brutal sabbath influenced dirge annihilates all who dare question the heaviness contained here. Mid way through a full on speed metal blitzkrieg destroys what ever survivors litter the charred landscape, and another bulldozer slow part fills the mass graves. Cold Electric Fire sound like some one in the next room listening to an ambient album. BORING!!! The FDIS song is very good though. AH (The Circle Game/1845 W Grace St./Richmond, VA 23220)

FIG 4.0/STAND • split 7"

There's some good part and bad parts to the bands on this split. Fig. 4.0 mix all the '90s genres up into one festering pot. Thrash, screamo, pop punk, etc. When they nail it, they do it quite well. But overall nothing really gels and the songs are too unfocused and don't leave a lasting impression. Stand remind me of what passed off as hardcore in the mid '90s. Lots of screaming and shouting over quasi rock music that lacks fire. Ehhhh.... MA (SuperFi/PO Box 8974/Birmingham/B17 8BA/UK)

TEEN CTHULU/WORMWOOD • split picture disc 7"

Teen Cthulu continually crush (or is that formerly crush now they have ended?) with heavier than the doors of hell black metal. Fast, yet lumbering. There's a keyboard for icy effect amongst the rotor machine percussion and wrenching guitar work. On par with their LP and recent split with Cream Abdul Babar. Wormwood... If Dario Argentio was to use metal for a soundtrack, this band would be a perfect choice. Haunting piano and female vocals underneath rising and falling guitars and dual male vocals. I'm generally not a fan of metal, but this is pretty damn good. MA (Accident Prone/PO Box 450585/Escondido, CA 92045)

TURN AROUND NORMAN/ THE MINUS TIDE • split 12"

Another fine release on Mountain, by two bands from West Virginia. Turn Around Norman has a familiar sound, somewhat similar to early '90s screamo hardcore. Along with the screaming vocals and crunchy guitars, they add dreamy parts to their songs, making them unique in their own way. They have dual female/male vocals, which complement each other nicely. Turn Around Norman is a very political band, singing about capitalism and how it alienates us from other human beings, and from nature. They have included explanations about their songs, along with a list of political resources on the web and through books. On the flipside there's The Minus Tide... Wow! This is the weirdest thing! Listening to the intro, I expected this to be some straight rock act, complete with keyboards and an acoustic guitar. But then, in comes the heaviest guitar you can imagine. And from there on, it's just metal madness! Interesting... to say the least. Well played epic metal, heavy and melodic from start to finish. Their lyrics, which are more like stories, are about being a pirate on a haunted ship, about mutants taking over the power, and there's one that tells the story of being abducted by aliens! Crazy! Awesome! ES (Mountain/PO Box 220320/Greenpoint PO/Brooklyn, NY/11222-9997)

THE HEARTACHES/THE AGITATORS • split 7"

The Heartaches play the Clash or Sham 69 styled punk. Not my thing these days. Kinda depresses me honestly. The Agitators are playing some old East Bay punk. Not good at all. I prefer Chrimpshrine or Soup. NW (RockNRoll Radio/Ooshamssesteenweg 129/3581 Beverlo-Beringen/Belgium)

HYPATIA/ROBOT ATTACK • split 7"

A split seven inch with two bands, both from the punk rock haven of 781 Brookside Road in Allentown, PA. Hypatia plays Crucial Unit-esque wit thrash, with song titles like "You Can't Smash The State With A Gogurt and Xsupermarket sweepX." You gotta love youth crew music played by people who don't want to hurt you. On the flip side is Robot Attack. They pretty much play basic hardcore stuff, but mixed with atmospheric instrumentations done with a theremin, accordion, and didgeridoo which gives it a unique sound. Both bands have explanations for their lyrics, which is always a plus, and come across as fun people. Besides the displaced sing vocals on the first Hypatia song, and the feeling I get that they are closet ska fans (not that there's anything wrong with that) this is a hot selection. MAH (sofo.fakeindependent.com)

I OBJECT/THE PESTS • cassette

Wow, The Pests sound like they belong in LA circa 1983! Well, without the blast beats. Both bands play snotty punk about skating, punk rock, and society. Total thrash with old school charm. This stuff is really fun. The only difference I noticed between the two bands was that one had a girl singer. Skate on... CF (PO Box 1084/Bufalo, NY 14215)

JASON/RADIKALKUR • split LP

It's boring records like this that make it hard to reach my gratuitous capitalization and exclamation point quota. Very hum drum performance by both, but Jason's addition of what seems to be alterna-metal takes them from bad to unbearable. I was embarrassed to be playing this in my rather crowded apartment. Jason sings in Portuguese (a really weird sounding language to begin with) and Radikalkur in Austrian. (That's German, genius. - Lisa) Metal guitars dominate the latter. How did 6 labels think this was good? AH (Malarie Recs./PO Box 153/75661 Roznov P-R/Czech Republic)

JET BY DAY/THE MAGINOT LINE • split 7"

Jet By Day delivers a fun and catchy indie rock tune. It has sweet simplicity as well as rock and roll rhythm. The personal relationship theme lends itself well to the style Jet By Day plays. The Maginot Line's song about advertising's effect on our world and psyches was pretty interesting. They use a new wave start-stop tempo and melodic punk chords to create a really fun song. Both bands on this split can play a good song. LO (Two Sheds Music/PO Box 5455/Atlanta, GA 31187)

SUICIDE PARTY/ THE SCARLET LETTER • split 7"

Suicide Party plays mid-tempo thrashy punk, really it sort of reminded me of The Exploited. The Scarlet Letter are much faster and more chaotic, to the point where it almost sounds sloppy but really it's tight. There's a few mosh parts thrown for good measure also. Both bands are good at what their doing, so if you're into thrash this is worth checking out. BH (Vendetta/Gleimstr. 17/10437 Berlin/Germany)

NEW BRUTALISM/HIT SELF DESTRUCT • split 7" New Brutalism pushes forth a sound that is edgy and disjointed, while at the same time bringing a distinct melody. It sounds like someone deconstructed a DC band from the eighties. My only really complaint with their song is that it seems to stop short in the middle of the moment. They should put two songs on here if they are going to do that. Hit Self Destruct plays a nicely layered melodic hardcore song with a good amount of discord and bite. It comes at you with a complex approach and uses a refined style to get the rock job done. I liked their song quite a bit. This is the one Electric Human Project 7" that no one seems to buy. It seemed weird to me since people are usually into New Brutalism. Then, it dawned on me. The cover art for this record is all wrong. It is bright yellow and has little more than the names in a crazy font and the picture of a keyboard. Silly bands, that keyboard message is inaccurate. I didn't even hear any keyboards on this record. Your 7" looks like a Red Light Sting record. The Red Light Sting fans who buy this record will be let down. It is the same reason why your record shouldn't have the crass font with black and white artwork. There are just too many bands nowadays. Please, don't confuse people. Help them out with some simple monikers. I don't mean put yourself in a box, just do something that is appropriate for you. For example, you should out a picture of a building on your record. That would make way more sense without confining you too much. It could still be yellow even. LO (The Electric Human Project/500 S Union St./Wilmington, DE 19805)

RUINATION/POINT OF FEW • split 7" Ruination, though dead as a band, seems to have yet another new release. The three songs here are an extension of all their other records, but with an extra something... They are heavy and full, without really losing tempo. Unlike some of their regular fast thrash, these songs are filled in and sound good as such. Plus, the lyrics for these songs are some of their best as they decry the role of the US' meddling internationally. This set of Ruination songs seems perfectly suited to the hardcore sound coming out of Chicago in the mid '90s when bands like MK-Ultra ruled the day. I love that stuff. Point Of Few bring frantic hardcore with a thrash beat and a screamo quality. These songs are fast, super fast. They grate on your ears and berate your skull. These songs seem more hyper and crazed than the ones on either of the 7"s on 625 or Coalition. I liked the energy and intensity of these songs. Plus, their subject matter and lyrical style is smart. Point Of Few decies the ills and complications of the modern world as well as the human's frustrating role in it. All in all, a well done record. LO (Wicked Witch Recs./PO Box 3835/1001 AD Amsterdam/The Netherlands)

WALLRIDE/S.A.M.E. • split CD These two Brazilian bands put out a great split CD. Wallride play fast melodic hardcore that is both catchy and energetic. They play 6 songs and they sing in their native tongue. It appears that they are mostly women playing in S.A.M.E. and their 4 tracks are fronted by powerful female vocals. Their sound alternates between more hard-hitting hardcore to emotive melodic songs. S.A.M.E. is really quite good. They sing in English. This really is a good CD. KM (Aqua c/o Juliano Knela/Rua: Mura 356-28 Guanaja/Porto Alegre/RS Brasil)

V/A • Advanced Calculus 2xCD Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania is home to the only reason to turn on a radio between Chicago, Illinois and Jersey City, New Jersey. That would be WRCT 88.3 FM in stereo, where they put it all together for you. This double CD compilation is a remarkable document of the underground music scene that also calls Pittsburgh home and continues growing in strength and complexity and abundance. The crossover between the WRCT community and Pittsburgh's underground music community has always been essential to the strength and vigor of both. If you make music in Pittsburgh it will be heard on WRCT and if you make music in Pittsburgh your influences and inspirations will also be heard on WRCT. This mutually beneficial relationship guarantees both communities an audience and powerful incentives to remain fiercely independent. The tracks on this compilation are culled from two years of live on-air performances at WRCT. Those who listen will hear one tune each from 28 bands. The breadth and depth of approaches to making music reveals a large, creative, and informed community growing across the hills, valleys, towns, and neighborhoods that are the Pittsburgh metropolitan area. A few genres are bent or amalgamated, some joyful goofiness is carried out, and many moods and emotions are evoked. But, as with WRCT itself, the music here always rocks. The good people of Pittsburgh know that rock and roll is the spirit and soul of life itself and they are not afraid to share their knowledge with you. All you have to do is listen, Blunderbuss is an appropriate choice to lead off the proceedings. They have practiced rock and roll alchemy for more than ten years and are simply the finest band no one outside of Pittsburgh has heard. I suspect many who have basked in the glory of a Blunderbuss performance will tell you that this band is the Sound of Pittsburgh. But there are 27 more reasons to hear this compilation. All tracks included are fine examples of working bands pushing themselves outward and kicking up some heady creative dust in the process. To be blunt, this compilation rules in hell with an iron fist. Check out WRCT on the web at wrct.org. SJS (These Bricks Are Mine/5001 Baum Blvd, #630/Pittsburgh, PA 15213)

V/A • The Silence Of Fire CD The title alone let's me know this is going to be bad. Sure enough the first band, Escape Engine, reassures me that yes, indeed, this is horrible. If you thought Ashes were atrocious, then you need to hear this band. Whew! What a stinker! The Kite Eating Tree further remind me of the sad state of affairs and lack of originality in the world of indie rock. Shade Seven... ugh... And it just sinks deeper and deeper. Much like my review copy of this is sinking deep, deep down into the leachate of the LA landfill. MA (BurningDaisies.com)

V/A • Troubleman Sampler CD The Troubleman Sampler, as it is a collection of Troubleman releases, has an expected mix of the weird, loud, experimental, and that which cannot be classified. While there is always a new band of interest on these samplers, there is always the thing that confounds. I enjoyed the tracks from Glass Candy, Erase Errata, The Rogers Sisters, Milky Wimpshake, ABCs, Panthers, Red Monkey, and Subtinx the most—basically anything that is either punk related or sounds like an '80s throwback. Most of the bands on here are worth checking out of you can handle the regular TMU fare. Personally, I feel like samplers are just a big ad I have to review (when we have already reviewed most of these releases on their own). LO (Troubleman Unlimited/16 Willow St./Bayonne, NJ 07002)

V/A • 2 Legs Bad, 38 Legs Good 7" Hooray for the 7" comp... the only comp I can sit through anymore. Luckily for me, this one is also good. Here you get the blazing hardcore insanity of Corn On Macabre, the hard-hitting screamo outfit Textbook Traitors, the edgy and wild melodic hardcore of The Crimson Spectre, and then the pure punishment of Witchcraft By A Picture's frenzied noise. The back cover has an inspirational message about the power and positivity behind multi-person projects. Hooray, a comp with a good theme. My only complaint is that insert is illegible due to the light beige printing on white paper. Still, cool bands and a good message. LO (Magic Bullet/PO Box 2370/Merrifield, VA 22116)

V/A • Frank Forever LP This record is dedicated to Frank Vagnozzi, guitarist and vocalist of the Reckless Deer Hunters. It features six bands from the Brandon, FL: Reckless Deer Hunters, Anoxia, John Madden and the Electric Condoms, Lawnmowers Gone Awry, Dancing Lepers, and D.F.C. The sounds range from the Dead Kennedy/Angry Samoan farcical punk of JMATEC to more straightforward thrashy hardcore from Reckless Deer Hunters, D.F.C., and Anoxia. LGA are really spazzy, remind me a bit of Go! and The Dancing Lepers have kind of a mutant lounge thing going. Its too bad that what started out as a comp documenting a number of bands from a scene had to become a tribute to one of the band members that died. It seems like a fitting tribute to an integral member of their scene though. BH (\$2 to Sound Idea/PO Box 3204/Brandon/FL 33509-3204)

V/A • Times Are Hard For Dreamers CD This benefit compilation for the New York School of Arts features songs by The Fiction, Scent of Human History, Hit Self Destruct, This Scars Me, Helen of Troy, Countdown to Putsch, Are You Fucking Serious, Operation Latte Thunder, Memory As Perfection, The South, A Day In Black And White, The Faeries, Turn Around Norman, Hurrah, Books Lie, A Petal Fallen, and Dead City. Some of the bands are quite good, while others are okay, with a few being pretty boring in my opinion. But over all the music is good and as a whole this is a good sampler of some up and coming bands. Also, the comp comes with a nice booklet that talks about the New York School of Arts as well as the value of the arts themselves. The booklet also includes photos, lyrics, and artwork from the bands. A well put together compilation with a theme that shows thought and love. KM (Waking Recs./1803 Riverside Dr. Apt. 5M/New York, NY 10034)

V/A • Broadcast International CD A Perfect Kiss plays romantically jangle indie rock that is under siege from their metal backbone. All of their elements come together to create a perfectly miserable tone of angels and demons. Maria Blonde give you two songs of melody and distortion. Their style is very post-hardcore, with many artful quirks and strange change-ups. It is interesting that they sometimes go into a really heavy section when so much of their sound is on the other end of the spectrum. Alien 101 play pop punk similar to those radio friendly bands that have become so huge in the last few years. It is catchy and sweet. May Sixteen have a strange sound. I feel like I'm listening to The Damned that someone added an extra metal track to. Weird. [The] K Word adds a hint of rock with their light and catchy sound. It is fuzzed out, so it keeps a certain amount of edginess due to that. To What End bring up the rear with heavily dramatic metal that is full of harmony and breakdowns. You get 2-3 songs from each of the bands on this comp. LO (.Five Limey Records/7536 East Warren Drive #15-304/Denver, CO 80231)

V/A • Empower: Exercising The Human Spirit CD This benefit comp comes in a DVD box. The funny thing is that there is a disclaimer on the back that explains that it is only a CD and that "the DVD case is simply a form of artistic expression." I think when I first read that I actually asked out loud "are you fucking serious?" One of the first things I noticed about this CD was how void it seemed to be of any artistic expression (unless maybe they're trying to express their boredom.) The insert reads like a travel brochure to a small town that you don't want to visit. There are no pictures, no lyrics, just a little information about where and when the songs were recorded (which incidentally seems to mostly be around 1999 or 2000). Most of the music here fits perfectly into the indie/emo/hardcore category that seems to be merging and manifesting itself these days as one boring-ass tired aesthetic with a faux hawk (as if they've painstakingly removed the punk aspects from this music with a syringe). There's also a Cream Abdul Babar song on here recorded live on the radio, which amidst the rest of this stuff it just gets lost. The purpose of this CD is to benefit the Teen Outreach Reproductive Challenge of New York City otherwise know as TORCH. There are two little write-ups about this organization in the insert, but they are both short and a little vague for someone with no previous knowledge of their program. Bands on this comp that some kids might be excited about include: Jonah's Onlinedrawing, Ann Beretta, Joshua Fit For Battle, Frodus, Cream Abdul Babar, Burn it Down, The Gods Hate Kansas, The Ladderback, On The Might Of Princes, and Waifle. FIL (Under Radar/PO Box 1641/Seaford, NY 11783)

V/A • Gravity Video 2 & Soundtrack CD This is just like the last video in that if you're really into these bands then you might be interested, but it's short and I think it's one of those things that you just watch once and then probably not again till some asks, "What's this?" This time, however, it's also available on DVD. The bands on here are The Locust, The Rapture, Tristeza, The Black Heart Procession, Men's Recovery Project, and Sea of Tombs. I think the only one I really enjoyed was The Black Heart Procession. It's pretty and black and white and the song is recorded live and it's just the two of them. The Tristeza and Rapture songs are both recorded live as well. The rest are just old recordings, which makes the idea of a soundtrack seem a little ridiculous. Speaking of which, The Locust video here takes this band to new levels of lame, sad, and boring. It's depressing to watch them try so hard to be weird. It reminds me of high school. (Remember when you put out the John Henry West 7"? That was awesome!) FIL (Gravity/PO Box 81332/San Diego, CA 92138)

V/A • Playing Four Square Vol. 3 CD This is a comp featuring bands from Lookout, Initial, Better Looking and Negative Progression Records. I hesitate to call this a comp, it feels more like a "sampler" featuring bands from four labels instead of one. The insert only lists the address and web address of each label, maybe it could be a comp if it gave a history of each label and made some kind of connection between them. But the only reason given for including the labels on the release is that they are "independent," though the "independence" of at least one of them is very arguable. Now that I've said my peace here's a list of the bands featured: Counterfit, Ted Leo, Black Cross, The Jealous Sound, The Goodwill, The Oranges Band, Criteria, No Knife, Over It, Communique, Helicopter Helicopter, The And/Ors, Contender, Even in Blackouts, The Jazz June, Ides of Space, The June Spirit, Pattern, The Reputation, Track Star, Adventures of Jet, Washdown and Ultimate Fakebook. BH (Suburban Home Recs./PO Box 40757/Denver, CO 80204)

DEMOS DEMOS DEMOS DEMOS DEMOS DEMOS

AGHAST • CD demo Super raw and lo-fi crust in the vein of Confuse, Disclose, and Atrocious Madness. This is so good you'll swear it was recorded twenty years ago. The songs range without being faceless thrash. Tempo changes, pauses, and other tactics are put to use in the aural assault. The guitars are beyond abrasive and the feedback is a plus. One of the best demos I have ever heard. Someone give these guys some vinyl!!!! MA (crust_kontrol@hotmail.com)

AFTERBLAST • Rectal Disaster demo Gurgling putrid gore grind, wall owing in the fecal matter left behind by Haemorrhage, Machetazo, and the Razorback Records roster. Not as good as Carcass, of course, but not as slick as Exhumed. If any of you gore fiends are desperately searching through the HaC demo reviews for a new band, here you go. 11 songs of blood soaked BRUTALITY!!!! AH (Marcus Smolar/Kapemikussr. 19/65929 Frankfurt (Main)/Germany)

AK-64 • Remeber The Fallen demo This is a German 3 piece grind unit. The first 14 tracks don't have titles, but mathematical equations instead. It sounds as if it were recorded on Playskool first recorder. Thirty-three tracks of really bad band practice. It would even be better is the lyrics were there. CD (Hombre Lobo Recs./Postfach 103117/60101 Frankfurt (Main)/Germany)

AS LONG AS WE'RE ALL LIVING WE'RE ALL DYING • CD demo The first song reminds me a lot of Left For Dead, but then the rest of the songs don't so much. The fast parts are fun and punk like that, but then sometimes they slow it down to midpaced or mosh part type stuff and it totally loses me. I would guess that you probably already have a pretty good idea of what these guys sound like just from their name, so trust your instincts. Apparently it's just two dudes though, even though there are three on this record. What I don't understand is why do demos like this start with long ass samples? When I'm about to hear something for the first time, I don't want to have to wait for some movie clip to end first. The packaging is probably the nicest part, for a demo. It just comes in a stenciled and spray painted manila envelope, and I just discovered the patch that comes with it and it confused the shit out of me for a second. I was like, "Alawalwad youth crew? What the hell is that?" Then I realized it was the abbreviation and I was like, "Fuck, that's too long." It doesn't quite have the ring of say D.R.I. or T.S.O.L. FIL (freewebs.com/aslongashe)

B-ABUSE • [tens]65 demo European, screamy emo that does nothing for me. Its recorded well, etc. But its nothing I would ever listen to. I thought perhaps by the name that these guys were like a Swedish d-beat band... that I'm sure I would have dug. NW (Hombre Lobo Recs./Postfach 103117/60101 Frankfurt (Main)/Germany)

BLACK BOX • demo CD Relatively straight-forward thrashy punk with political lyrics. Its well played but after a while all the songs kind of blur together. It's not bad, its just the same thing you've heard a thousand times before. BH (laidoffrecords.com)

FRIEL • CD demo Ten quick tracks of high pitched screaming and grindcore noise. Don't leave the room to pee, you'll miss the whole recording. Like any good grind band, they have thoughtful political lyrics delivered in an incomprehensible manner. Friel's sound is nervous, twitchy, and frantic. LO (\$1 to Dan Shea/120 McMechen St. #C3204/Baltimore, MD 21217)

FIGHTING DOGS • West Philadelphia CD demo

These guys from west Philly play crust hardcore in the vein of bands like From Ashes Rise or Tragedy. The songs are full of fast d-beats and thick guitar tones with some manic vocals as well. The lyrics are really well written in a semi metaphoric social type way. I could have done with out the emo like breakdown in the first song but other than that I have no complaints. Good Poison Girls cover also. CF (\$3 to 4719 Hazel Ave./Philadelphia, PA 19143)

GLASS AND ASHES • CD demo

HOLY GUACAMOLE!!! This band has it going on. Ruff and Gruff vocals with speedy hardcore beats. Definitely kicks butt. Very original sound, but still comparable to From Ashes Rise, Torches To Rome, and even Avail. Well written lyrics about our fucked up world. Check it out. JB (glassandashes@hotmail.com)

BUTT • It's Butt CD demo

This is a sampler of Butt with 3 tracks from their new album *Slime Slurps*, with the last track coming from *A Very Bert Dax Christmas*. Bands consisting of guitar and drums seems to be the rage these days. With Butt, you get just that. Comparable to say The Strokes, or maybe something off the Estrus label, although not quite as polished. On track three Butt even throws in a little piano. They finish up this short DIY sampler with a Christmas ditty which might be just the thing for the holidays coming up. JG (9102 Edwards Dr./Olivette, MO 63132)

DAMN RIGHT • CD demo

Damn Right is an odd combination of surf punk music and female grindcore vocals. The music has a tendency to be melodic and layered, so these simply low or high screamed vocals just tend to wreck the vibe. I know they are going for something sick, but even in brutality there can be more than just what falls out of your face. There is nothing but a cover for this demo. I wonder what their songs are about. LO (corneliaglamour@hotmail.com)

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY • CD demo

Don't know what it is, but I just can't connect with this. The music is full on intense thrash with some mid '90s hardcore influences from the days of Coleman, Nema, etc. But in the end I'm just eh... Maybe it's just me... MA (\$3 to Hanged Hero Records/PO Box 99/Scranton, SC 29591)

ECFU • demo

At first I was skeptical because I had to turn up the stereo to 26 to hear the music, and the lyrics are like really basic, but after a few listens I could appreciate the snotty, raw thrash punk these kids from Schenectady, NY. The best song on the whole tape is "Aiside," a number about how mini ramps rule. I LOVE MINI RAMPS! I'll leave you with this from ECFU "Mini ramp is fuckin' skate/in a backyard in a park/Love to skate them in the dark/If your fat or if your skinny/Shut up and skate the mini!" CD (518-346-7291)

NO ONE DARE CALL IT TREASON • Preparing For... 3" CD demo
These guys should change their name to No One Dare Call It Good. The irony of this recording is that its recorded so low and "quiet" that it makes sense with the title. Five badly recorded and played songs. NW (Feast Of Hate & Fear/13414 SW 111th Terr./Miami, FL 33186)

THE PARAPLEGICS • It's All Downhill From Here CD demo

Sing along beer gut core with clean bass and a computer clip-art cover cleverly depicting Donkey Kong smoking a joint. If I didn't know any better, although I do, I would say this sounds like a worn out BGK cover-band crawling into the studio on all fours after a reckless weekend debauch in Amsterdam's red light district. Songs like "Fuck You Doosh Bag" and "Doritos To The Slam" really speak to the soul: beautiful, insightful, and truly thought provoking. As a side note, they dedicate this CD-R to their dead drummer. MM (theparaplegics.com)

HOW THEY LIGHT CIGARETTES IN PRISON • demo

I hate it when people put demos in manila envelopes. Silk screened or not, I find them annoying. The size is just all wrong. You aren't a Gravity 7" back in the day. Get over it and try to contain all the accoutrements to the demo inside the little plastic case. That is all people will carry around anyway. Once I got over the packaging I realized a new oddity.... The stuff on the cassette. Apparently, How They Light Cigarettes In Prison is one guy (with a chorus of whoever wants to be involved) singing and screaming like one might be over a powerful hardcore band. Except for the fact that there is no band. It is just a chorus of odd voices streaked with emotion and energy. After the 4 recorded songs you get a live set, which, as you might expect, sounds like a bunch of people screaming at a show while other people make chit-chat and tune. How They Light Cigarettes In Prison takes spoken word performance art and the idea behind Jud Jud to a whole new level. They included a few inserts that explain the emotions and ideas that fueled this project. Though, hilariously enough, no lyric sheet. LO (Disco Bloodbath/902 Huntington Ave./Boston, MA 02115)

THE HUMAN CONDITION • CD demo

This sounds as bad and metal core as everything else I've reviewed this issue. Just because I live in Albany doesn't mean I can relate. NW (Coach Recs./8720 Spring Valley Ln./Indianapolis, IN 46231)

LOOK BACK AND LAUGH • demo

Pretty straightforward power violence stuff, though it stays away from the blast beats. Most of the songs alternate between standard thrashy fast parts and slower mosh parts. The lyrics are indictments of consumer culture. The music is well played but the recording quality suffers a bit in some spots. BH (PO Box 11535/Oakland, CA 94611)

ILLUMINATI • CD demo

The one sheet (I read this while listening to bad music to bring a little laughter into the experience) lists Bad Brains, Buzzcocks, Wire, Minor Threat, Fugazi, Drive Like Jehu, and Rites Of Spring as influences. But fuck if I hear any of that in this music. Okay, so some guitar work may be influenced by Drive Like Jehu and Fugazi, but other than that... They might enjoy listening to those bands, but it's not in their playing or music. Just another run of the mill post hardcore band. MA (Discoparlante/Joao Da Silva/Casilla 120-Correo 12/La Reina, Santiago/Chile)

SETIEMBREONCE • CD demo

Setiembreonce plays hardcore that plays around with a few different styles. Thrash is the tempo many songs are in and many songs have thrash breakdowns, but there is plenty of pop punk elements and more than a little melodic hardcore. The overall sound is very strong. The songs have a lot of energy and structure to them, which makes them fun. All lyrics are in Spanish with English translations. (Though due to the poor copy job, I couldn't read the lyrics.) LO (Diego Perez/Guaná 2028/Cordon-Montevideo/CP: 11200/Uruguay)

PIREXIA • demo CD

Three songs of melodic hardcore/rock from Uruguay. The first song is a straightforward melodic hardcore song right down to the galloping drum beat. The second song starts out with a mid-tempo pace but diverges into some heavier more metallic areas. The third song is the mellowest and most rockish. The vocals are sung in Spanish but the lyrics are translated into English. The subjects range from personal to political. Its well played and anyone into melodic stuff will probably want to check it out, it didn't make that much of an impact on me though. BH (Diego Irigoyen/13302 Oxnard St./Van Nuys, CA 91401)

LIFE ENDS • CD demo

Life Ends came into being in response to all the tough guy hardcore in their local scene. They wanted to create music that sounded similar, but had a different message. There three songs discuss how people die everyday, how everyone will die at some point, and how silly a lot of the xtrendx are in the scene. The first two songs deal with becoming a statistic and living your life to the fullest. The music is youth crew inspired hardcore with harsh vocals and serious moshability. Life Ends has succeeded in their goal. LO (Mike DeLeon/723 McNeel/San Antonio, TX 78228)

THROUGH THESE EYES • July 2003 CD demo

Five tracks of aggressive and convulsed punk rock fronted by two female vocalists. Personal and politically charged lyrics coupled with the worst cover art ever created. If you think you would like Submission Hold, even if they recorded in the sewer with equipment they found floating by, then you will dig this demo. MAH (Phil/57 Grove Rd./Southampton/ SO15 3GH/UK)

THE REFUSENIKS • demo

High energy, generally mid-tempo hardcore. Its somewhat chaotic but maintains some amount of melody. Assfactor 4 comes to mind as a reference, the vocals are screamed in a very similar manner. The sound quality is about what you would expect given that this was recorded during a live performance at a radio station. BH (oneleafrecords.com)

THE SETUP • demo

At times this reminded me of Iconoclast (the mid-'90s Ebullition one), the music has a metal edge to it but the metal edge isn't dripping with mosh. There's also a melodic taste running throughout the songs, so much so that at times it slips into sounding more like Iron Maiden than a hardcore band. The lyrics always consist of tortured screams, which prevents the Iron Maiden comparison from being complete. The recording quality is good also. BH (thetsetup.com)

SUBURBAN DEATH MACHINE • demo

I'm going to go ahead and get the fact that this band has members of Crucial Unit, Aphasia, and Krokod Grind out of the way up front. There. Suburban Death Machine give you nine straightforward hardcore songs with a rough edge. Heavy vocals delivered in a plainly tough style over music that you can certainly mosh to give this band a tough sound. SDM is edgy, mean, and full of catchy choruses. Their slow thrash tempo makes you pay attention to each musical detail and every angry lyric. LO (\$3 to Ian Ryan/5618 Porusset St./Pittsburgh, PA 15217)

IS THIS REAL • demo CD

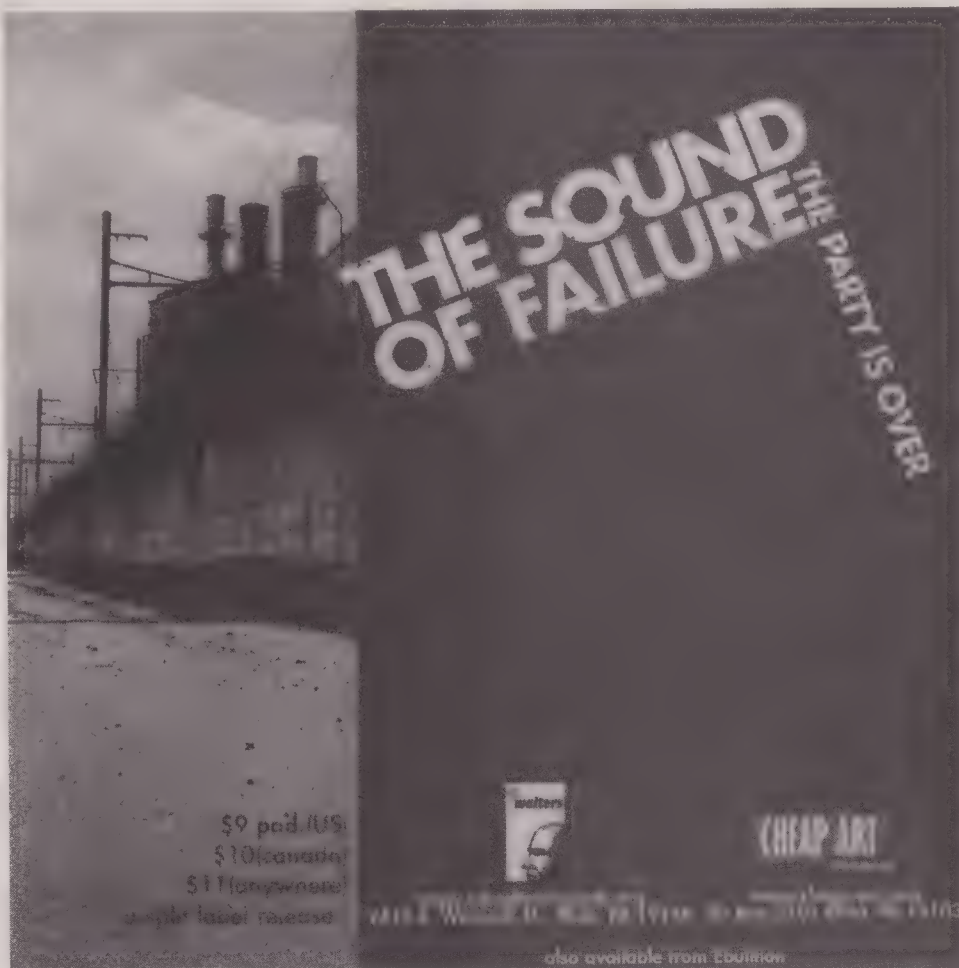
Straight-forward thrashy hardcore. The songs have the usual fast/slow change-ups, the transitions are handled well. The vocals are rough yet not completely screamy and cover both personal and political subjects. Its a solid release with tightly played songs but its not really that exciting unless you're looking for fifty billionth thrash record to add to your collection. BH (\$1 to Box 70/Island Heights, NJ 08732)

L'CHANCE • CD demo

Ack!! Oh gawd, this is really bad. Granted emo is generally a very shitty strain of music, but sometimes it can be pulled off well. This is NOT one of those times. Imagine every cliché emo band from the mid '90s rolled into one. Magnify that tiresome headache. Songs like "Ash Filled Picture Book" and "Looking Glass Tears" are excellent indicators of what terror lays in store. Yes, it's that bad. MA (giveupyourghost.com)

WRECKAGE • This Is America demo

This is some mid paced to fast thrash punk/hardcore. Six songs of political lyrics aimed at war, not relating, and our doomed society. Despite the crusty style lyrics, layout and Gauze style logo, this has more a Neon Christ feel, than like Discharge or something. A good release from a band that can only get better. CD (24-75 38th St. #4B/Astoria, NY 11103)



TOP 10 LISTS

Lisa Hoglesball

THE ASSISTANT—We'll Make The Roads By Walking CD • CAUSTIC CHRIST—Can't Relate LP • CALVARY—The Will Of The Way 7" • FIND HIM AND KILL HIM—We Know 7" • THE AWAKENING/VIRGINIA BLACK LUNG—split 7" • ARROGANTA AGITATORER—Arrogans 7" • DEL CIELO—Wish & Wait LP • America #11 • YAGE—Anders Leben!? LP • LA FRACTION—live • getting married

Nate Wilson

RUNAMUCKS—Of A Different Breed CD • WRECKAGE—demo • SELFISH—Cry For Love, Cry For Death CD • SICK AND TIRED—demo • HOLIER THAN THOU?—High On BBQ one sided 12" • THINK I CARE—LP • DROP DEAD/UNHOLY GRAVE—split 7" • CLOSE CALL—CD • VIOLENT MINDS—s/t 7" • OUTTA HAND—live/demo

Mark McCoy

BONE AWL—demo and EP • SATANIC WARMMASTER—Opferblut LP • PEST—Blasphemy Is My Throne 12" • XASTHUR—Suicide In Dark Serenity 12" • WRECKAGE—This Is America demo • Voices Wake Us #7 • WES EISOLD • THE LOCUST—Plague Soundscapes LP • DEBAUCHERY—Dead Scream Symphony 10" • BLACK DICE—new 12" • DAUGHTERS—live

Matt Average

THE RITES—LP and live • EL NUDO/QUILL—split 7" • CUT THE SHIT—Harmed And Dangerous LP and live • MUNICIPAL WASTE—live and Waste 'Em All LP • CAUSTIC CHRIST—live and Can't Relate LP • V/A—Mein Comp 7" • THE CRUCIFUCKS—s/t LP • CONSUME—Who's The Real Monster? 7" • BUMBKLAAT—Ciegos CD • RIISTETTY—Orjat Ja Kurjat 10" • CHAINSAW/CONGA FURY—live • DEATH SQUAD—7" • 17TH CLASS—In Utter Contempt... CD • VIOLENT MIND—s/t 7" • PUNCH IN THE FACE—Dumb Hardcore 7" • BOXED IN—2nd 7" • FAR FROM BREAKING—The Identity 7" • RAW POWER—You Are The Victim CD • CREAM ABDUL BABAR/KYLESA—split CD • CEMENTERIO SHOW—anything

Chuck Franco

IRON MAIDEN and MOTORHEAD—live! (And backstage passes! Thanks Seymour Duncan) • DSB and ASSAULT—live (Still one of the best shows ever!) • BILLY IDOL wearing my hat and making the curled lip at me. (Thanks again, Seymour) • ASSCHAPEL—Fire And Destruction LP • Voices Wake Us #7 'zine • MUNICIPAL WASTE—live/LP • JOHNNY CASH—R.I.P. • ANTI CIMEX—Country Of Sweden LP • UUTUS—all • ULVER—promo 10" repress

Marianne Hofstetter

YAPHET KOTTO—Euro Tour 12" • PART II—Weeping, Wailing, And Ganshing Of Teeth 10" • RAEIN—live • GANTZ—live • MILEMARKER—Satanic Versus 12" • Televisionwithoutpity.com • BLACKTOP CADENCE—all

Scott Torguson

BUCK 65—Talkin' Honky Blues CD • LYRICS BORN—Later That Day... CD • BOB MOULD—live • TED LEO—live • Cherry Street Vegetarian in Philly • playing basketball • DAVID BLAINE • home-cooked meals • Greta my pitbull • free time

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LA FRACTION—live • THIS IS MY FIST—live • THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB/CARRIE NATIONS—split 7" • STOP IT!!—Self Made Maps LP • REACTIONARY 3—7" • FTYA—Room For One More 7" • YAPHET KOTTO—Euro Tour 12" • CAREER SUICIDE—Reach For The Sars 7" • WILLIAM MARTYR 17—discography CD • far away friends

Timothy Sheehan

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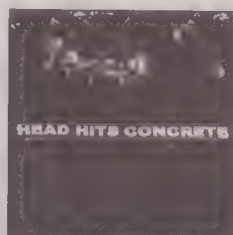
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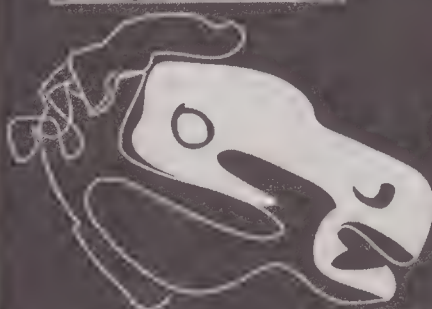
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This is probably the best death metal release I've heard all year, unless my horrible memory is forgetting something... but either way, it's easily one of the top 10 Death Metal releases of the last five years. (Aversiononline.com)



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AMERICA #11 5.5x8.5 \$2 104pgs.

This issue deals entirely with Gainesville's co-operative/non-profit record store Wayward Council. Travis gave out a questionnaire to volunteers (of all stages) about the many aspects of being involved in such a project. This issue consists of the answers to that set of questions; most of which are long and involved. I found this totally engrossing. The trials and tribulations of community punk projects bring up so many discussion points and ideas, things like this should be required reading for anyone looking to get involved. Personally, I find the success of Wayward Council inspiring in a world set to crush such endeavors. This issue has detailed answers from the volunteers as well as fun photos of people taking part. I think it is a pretty honest inside look—and that's awesome. LO (PO Box 13077/ Gainesville, FL 32604)

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS NETWORK #2

7x8.5 \$4 44pgs.

This issue combines both 'zines and is mainly focused on the on going struggle of political prisoners within the US. There are update reports from the individual chapters of the Anarchist Black Cross Network from different cities as well as many update articles on specific political prisoners, which makes up the bulk of the 'zine. The articles have a wide range of perspective, making for a comprehensive and interesting read, from overlooked political prisoner suicides to the plight of transgendered prisoners and beyond. PK (BTC/PO Box 11331/Eugene, OR 97440)

ART #1 4.25x5.5 \$1 24pgs.

I don't get to pick out what I review, so this is what I get. A shitty 'zine with no time put into the process of making it. Stupid pictures that are photocopied horribly, and moronic stories or poems or whatever they are that thankfully run off the page. Please, lord, no Art #2. MAH (DE/1830 Stevens Ave. #B/Minneapolis, MN 55403)

ATMOSPHERES 5.5x8.5 \$5 44pgs.

It has been a while since I'd seen a 'zine from Emily Heiple, so I was stoked to get this one. *Atmospheres* is a collection of her short stories and poetry of late. She tends to write her stuff in a basic pattern while infusing a lot of latent meaning and description in there as well. Her style is pretty cool. I have really enjoyed her longer short stories but the stuff in this 'zine tends to keep things short. Still the writing is easy to connect to. Fans of personal 'zines or fiction 'zines should check this out. LO (Broad Street Press/115 Empire St./Providence, RI 02903)

AVOW #15 5.5x8.5 \$2 36pgs.

This is a collection of artwork from Keith Rosson whose artwork has graced the pages of this very magazine more than a few times. Keith's art can be seen on the album covers of some of your favorite bands, or, in *Avow* #15. The work in here is varied and very stylized with explanations/commentary for each piece contained within. I have always really liked Keith's artwork and its unique abstractness. If you're a fan of good art (and by all means you should be) put two dollars in an envelope and send it to him. CF (Keith Rosson/2401 SE Taylor/Portland, OR 97214)

BALD CACTUS #21 5.5x8.5 50p 32pgs.

A fanzine from Leeds England, with music/'zine reviews and interviews with No Choice (recently reformed), Mingers (a new Leeds punk band), and Pilger (a more established band from Southampton). The interviews are decent, but I really enjoyed Andy's "Andy The Anarchist" rant section, especially the top 10 disgusting things, a few of which had me laughing out loud. Good. PK (Andy c/o 145-149 Cardigan Rd./Leeds/W. Yorks/LS6 1LJ/UK)

BRAINS 5.5x8.5 \$2/trade 32pgs.

This is a story of brain eating zombies, drunk punks, and beer. If that combination sounds intriguing you may enjoy this story full of punk stereotypes and death. SJS (Mayhap Publishing/PO Box 5841/Eugene, OR 97405)

BRING OUT YOUR DEAD #2 5.5x8.5 \$? 24pgs.

Bring Out Your Dead is mostly free form rants against society and youth culture. The writings are full of angst, anger, sorrow, and occasional suicide. The author seems to be exorcising some heavy-duty demons. There is very little light in this issue. SJS (subculturehero@hotmail.com)

BRUTAL HONEST TEA #2 3x3 \$? 16pgs.

This is a short story about all of a sudden realizing feelings of inadequacy about life choices and achievements even after accomplishing various personal goals. Like when hobbies such as running a distro or organizing a symposium become as much of a routine as a regular job. Mostly it's just about coming to this realization (in the context of a bar show) and how people react to that. In the end I guess it's about needing a little extra time for riding bikes and playing in the garden and shit, or maybe just to talk about it. It's super short and at the end there's an even shorter section called "Roommate Reviews, Episode #3". FIL (PO Box 14332/Portland, OR 97293)

BUBBLE BOBBLE #1-3 4.25x5.5 \$1 8pgs.

The first three issues of this Columbus Ohio based fanzine are a 1 page double-sized and quarter-folded mix of news, shows and reviews, with the bulk of the limited space being filled up with interviews. A better copying job and a different size might make this feel less thrown together. PK (taskmage@hotmail.com)

CARTASTRACCI #9 5.5x8.5 \$? 16pgs.

Neither I nor anyone currently on the HaC 'zine review staff can read Italian. That said, this 'zine (in Italian) is hard for me to decipher. Based on the layout, I would say it is a personal 'zine followed by a short record review section. There are long pieces broken up by titles that make them seem like reflections on topics (rather than articles). LO (Angelo Olive/Via Fratelli Rosselli, 39/72015 Fasano (BR)/Italy)

CULTOR SORE #15 5.5x8.5 \$2/trade 48pgs.

This 'zine used to be called *Sore*, but the convergence of the editor's other writing project *Cultor* with the regular 'zine was inevitable. Plus, it is more handy for the reader. I really enjoyed this read. *Cultor Sore* reconciles personal writing with fiction, ideas, and reviews. The content in here is varied, partially due to the contributions, but you also get a strong sense of the writer's voice throughout. *Cultor Sore* embodies all the aspects of a classic 'zine, personality and good writing. Check it out. LO (PO Box 68711/Virginia Beach, VA 23471)

CHUMPIRE #162 5.5x8.5 \$1 16pgs.

Greg fills this multiple page edition writing of his experiences traveling in Argentina and Uruguay. He writes at length about food, nightlife, bus rides, and punk rock in South America's Southern Cone. Greg tells of the lives and interests of his many acquaintances. In doing so he describes the area's culture and the continuing effects of the region's ongoing economic meltdown. SJS (PO Box 27/Annville, PA 17003)

CHAINBREAKER #2 7x8.5 \$2 44pgs.

Issue #1 was great and #2 is even better. Shelley, a bike mechanic from New Orleans, puts together a really great 'zine full of wonderful bike stories. This 'zine features true articles from around the world—from inventing bike powered washing machines in Guatemala to ingenious transport ideas from India, from tales of working in a bike shop in Ireland, to a traveling European bike circus! Also of interest are stories about the bike collective where Shelley works in NO, as well as an article by a friend about bike messenger in the same town. This issue is much more of a collection of a variety of writers with a variety of styles, which balances out the fact that the 'zine only covers one (albeit interesting) genre. Shelley does a great job at editing; her format is very readable and clean, but still appropriately cut-and-paste. The artwork is also noteworthy. Recommended to bike nerds or anyone just interested in a good read. Pick up issue #1 as well. JM (Shelley/621 N Rendon/New Orleans, LA 70119)

CHORD EASY 5.5x8.5 \$3 40pgs.

I think that maybe the name of this little handbook is a little misleading. It sure looks easy from the cover with a simple diagram of nine chords with arrows connecting them, but then you open it up to what looks like stereo instructions. It's dense, but with diagrams and charts and shit. One is a wheel that you're supposed to copy and then cut out so you can spin it around. All the chords are shown for both the guitar and piano which is good because all of our guitars have broken strings, but this is still gonna take a lot of work. It's a lot of theory, like why certain chords sound better together and stuff, but it's a pretty good resource to have. I just leave it sitting on the piano so I can sit down whenever and play random chords and thoroughly annoy my housemates. FIL (Light Living Library/PO Box 190-CE/Phm, OR 97370)

CHUMPIRE #163 5.5x4.25 37¢ 8pgs.

This tiny 'zine includes reviews of records, movies, shows, and other 'zines as well as stories of the writer's summer that just turn into reviews of records, movies, shows, and 'zines. This guy sure loves to review stuff! It's clever the way he embedded reviews in his stories, but it kind of takes away from the flow. All in all, I liked this teacher's tales of how he spent his summer, including time spent in Argentina and his return home to PA. I look forward to the review of this review in issue #167. MAH (Greg/PO Box 27/Annville, PA 17003)

CRACKS IN THE WALL #5 5.5x8.5 \$1/trade 28pgs.

Most of this issue is filled with a story called "Attack Of The Anthumans" which follows the life of a recent high school graduate yearning to escape a predetermined future. Through several unusual experiences he finds his way out. Isolation, desperation, and dreams aid his discoveries. Also included in this issue are thoughts and rants from editor Andy. He cogitates on mass produced entertainment, religion and democracy, and night walks. *Cracks In The Wall* is excellent reading for people who are able to see through the walls of society. SJS (Andy/2 Tinkham Glenn/Wilbraham, MA 01095)

DUNK AND PISS Collection 5.5x8.5 \$2 72pgs.

This might be more appropriately titled *The Very Best Of Dunk And Piss* because author Alex has seriously edited the contents of his 'zine to create this compilation. All of issues #1 through #4 are excluded and just a few stories make it from other issues as well. But the tales that remain range from wacky juvenile delinquency to riotous. Alex describes how much fun a high school punk can have with parents, speeding trains, Christians, high school, proms, first dates, and college applications. Oh, and of course with his typewriter as well. Alex's mix of scribbled stick figure comics, cut and paste layout, and intelligent use of the English language provides non-stop action and quite a few put down the book and laugh out loud moments. If you have missed out on the exploits of Alex and his friends this compilation of stories is a good way to catch up. SJS (Alex/11 Alger Dr./Rochester, NY 14624)

KM=KENT McCLARD,
AH=AARON HALL,
MAH=MIKE HALEY,
CF=CHUCK FRANCO,
CD=CHRIS DUPREY,
CU=CHRISTIAN UNSINN,
FIL=FIL MAKO,
JM=JENNY MUNDY,
PK=PAUL KANE,
SJS=STEVE SNYDER, &
LO=LISA OGLESBY

DEADLION 4.25x11 \$2/trade 16pgs.

I was glad to pick this one up for review because the 'zine is a collaborative project between two different artistic styles and that sounded pretty promising. Sebastian, the writer whose other 'zines you might be familiar with, and Mark, the artist who is popping up all over, have gotten together and created *Deadlion*. Overall, the stories are filled with passionate description and the layout is full of large brush strokes. Visually, it is a somber and shocking mood. Large fonts grab your eye as mixed media graphics enhance the themes. The stark contrast of dark black and plain white work well throughout. The words speak to the inner most voice of discovery, lonely, frustration, and lifetimes. The style is quite honest and open. As I read through this 'zine, I was impressed by the completeness of this project. The visuals fit the written text really well and the two combined create a very distinctive feel. LO (S. Sebastian Petsu/4811 Springfield Ave./Philadelphia, PA 19143)

DURGA 5.5x8.5 \$1/trade 32pgs.

I enjoyed reading this issue of *Durga*. Tracy writes about her experiences growing up in a very factual manner, which makes for a good read. She writes about her German heritage, educational experiences, proper use of language, mental health issues and intermixes all of these heavy subjects with stories about Harry Potter, her friend's children, crazy hellbound road trips, hiking and more. There's a strong emphasis on class issues which weaves in and out of the course of the 'zine, providing the reader with a consistent viewpoint in relation to Tracy's journey through life. I especially enjoyed reading about the symbolism behind her tattoos. Great. PK (PO Box 5841/Eugene, OR 97405)

FERTILE GROUND #3 5.5x8.5 \$? 40pgs.

This 'zine is all about the adventures of parenting, mostly from the Mama's point of view. This issue has the story of the birth of the editor and her twin sister, authored by none other than the Mom, plus a breast pump review, and lots of fun stories. You also get an interview with Herbie, age 23 mos. The best part is "Are You Democrat, Republican, Or Independent?" Yeah, no, no. Right on, kiddo! There is even some fun stuff like poems and a crossword puzzle, along with all the real life parenting prose. This is great. It is awesome to see people taking 'zines to other aspects of life, especially a topic so important, yet under covered by the hardcore and punk world. Awesome. CD (2084 Court Ave./Memphis, TN 38104)

FOR THE REEL Fall 2003 8.5x11 \$2/trade 18pgs.

Appropriately named, this 'zine discusses life and art. Well, maybe it is that appropriate since it doesn't really discuss film... which is what I think of when someone says "reel." Most of the content seems to come right from this person's sketch book/journal. The pages are filled with short, existential blurbs and swirls of art going that goes every which way. Question after question about the meaning of real life, waking up to reality, and moving through life litter these pages. This read gives no answers, but prods the reader to self examine her/himself. Issue #2 will be about the issues of art and education; contributions are encouraged. LO (Tracy Augustyn/PO Box 114/Bowmansville, NY 14026)

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH 5.5x8.5 \$? 40pgs.

Caitlin delivers a decent Q And Not U interview, but the bulk of *For What It's Worth* are pieces of odds and ends like Vanilla Ice trivia, some short book reviews and a "photo shoot" of a friend of hers. There's one piece of writing on her experiences intermingling at a social work agency. I wanted more substance and less filler. PK (spitshine_nickels@hotmail.com)

FLEA BITE #2 4.25x5.5 \$1/trade 24pgs.

This is a well written 'zine by a woman named Cathleen who recently moved to Bloomington, IN from the trash pile known as New Jersey. There are stories about the changes in her life since relocating to the new time zone, a short tour diary from her band's three week tour, a memoir of a 5th grade play called *Wakadogo Zoo* (which sounds ten times better than any school play I have ever seen,) and the death of her grandfather and Ozzie the cat. Nice little 'zine, and well worth the stamp it will cost ya. MAH (Cathy/PO Box 191/Bloomington, IN 47402)

HAZARDOUS WASTE July 2003 8.5x11 37¢ 4pgs.

Yeah, finally a good 'zine albeit very short or, excuse me, brief. This has an interview with Sleeper Cell, reviews of the latest crust/hardcore/d-beat records, and some writing on... hardcore. Similar to *Voices Wake Us* 'zine from NYC. Worth the stamps. AH (Matt Smith/210 Dewey St. #3/Worcester, MA 01610)

HEAD WOUND #15 8.5x11 \$2 28pgs.

Bands interviewed include Wasted from Finland, Cop Car Pile Up, Bastards Trained by Bastards, Broken Access, and the Mingers all from England. The interviews are intelligent and touch many subjects beyond the requisite band histories including politics in England, the implications of war in Iraq, animal rights, and various social aspects of alternative culture. The Broken Access interview in particular delves pretty deep into concerns of the bands often taking one of their songs as a jumping off point. There are essays and rants on the state of social and political life in England and the world and a few good jabs at corporate interest in punk culture. This 'zine seems to focus quite a bit on the Leeds scene, of which it is a part. One more interview is conducted with a local printing co-op called Footprint. The issue ends with a lengthy review of a weekend of punk rock called the 2003 Leeds and Bradford Punks Picnic put on by *Head Wound* publishers. There are many record and 'zine reviews included as well. SJS (145-149 Cardigan Rd./Leeds/LS6 1LJ/England)

HIDDEN T.R.E.W.T.H. news \$1 16pgs.

Hidden T.R.E.W.T.H. is a collective project from kids in the Rhode Island Training School (the juvenile prison). The pieces range from photo collage, fiction, poetry, lyric, to graffiti art. Seen as a whole, these pieces discuss the tragedy and hope of young people stuck in the system. It is an interesting read as the pieces have so much perspective. LO (Broad Street Press/115 Empire St./Providence, RI 02903)

HOT MILK 7x8.5 \$2 24pgs.

Hot Milk is an all interview 'zine, even down to the intro. If it ain't Q&A, it ain't in here. This issue has talks with A Team, Cursed, In Dying Days, Dave Boucher, and Jeffx about their various projects, plans, and mischief. For the most part, the interviews are short—but they do tend to reveal a lot about the personalities being reviewed. The layout could use some pizzazz but the content would be interesting to anyone who knows of the interviewees. LO (Tyler Hauck/1157 Ave. Van Harne/Montreal, QC/H2V 1K1/Canada)

JOYBRINGER #1 5.5x8.5 \$? 60pgs.

This 'zine is about being a radical mother and an attached parent. Editor Rahula describes her ideas on having and raising a child. She opens with an essay describing some aspects of a parenting style falling under the moniker "Attachment Parenting" that seems to emphasize keeping the baby and parents in close contact, avoiding isolation during the first months after birth, and fostering trustful bonds. Rahula explores facets of parenting in some detail, offering considerable personal experience and observation. Other articles included here discuss radical and attached fathers, gender and sexuality dynamics and choices, and the state of the world into which her child was born. One recurring theme is the need for activist groups to welcome parents and children and find ways for families to easily remain involved. Closing this issue is a list of books and websites Rahula recommends should anyone desire more information about attachment parenting and natural mothering in general. Some of the articles included here are reprints of Rahula's ongoing column in HaC. SJS (Rahula Janowski/4104 24th St./PMB #669/San Francisco, CA 94114)

JUPITER'S SORROWS 5.5x8.5 \$? 84pgs.

This is Ocean's first attempt at a 'zine is filled with fictional stories, poetry, arty images, and a handful of cynical/sarcastic commentaries about the reality of his disability (he broke his neck in a car accident) and his method of coping. I had a hard time relating to the short story style fiction and poetry, but enjoyed the glimpses into Ocean's life, even if they were fleeting at best. PK (The Lab/2613 Conger Ave. NW/Olympia, WA 98502)

'ZINE REVIEWS

KEROSENE #1 8.5x12 \$4 60pgs.

Kerosene is written in French, which I do not speak (or read). However, due to the great commonality of punk layout it isn't too hard for me to decipher what is in these pages. Regular content such as news, ads, live show reviews, and music reviews is coupled with a large amount of interviews. This time they are with Chevreuil, Tantrum, The Robocop Kraus, Burning Heads, Los Natas, Nostromo, Sanjam Records, Rad Party, Flamingo 50, and Craft. *Kerosene* has a nice, clean layout. LO (Dan/16 Rue De L'Egault/85600 Montaigne/France)

LITTLE BLACK STAR #29 5.5x8.5 37¢ 4pgs

After a four month hiatus forced on them from the lack of funds, *Little Black Star* has returned to give you more info about politics and activism. Though the issues are small and short, they tend to pack quite a punch. This issue features articles about the complications of the US's extended stay in Iraq, information about the ELF, and news that Bush has signed a bill making it illegal to sue companies involved with Iraqi oil. Holy shit! A stamp gets you an issue, a little more get someone else an issue and perhaps keeps them going for another round. LO (PO Box 197/Lewisburg, PA 17837)

THE MAFIA WAS BIGGER AND STRONGER THAN ANY OF US 5.5x8.5 \$2 32pgs.

In this 'zine, Tim recounts the story of his part time employment non-profit art supply store. The main plot is about how the workers try to organize and meet problems with management at every turn. However, the sub-plot to this 'zine (or moral of the story) is about how work basically sucks (the life out of you). The evil characters are certainly evil and those trying to make it by seem to always get the short end of the stick. It makes you want to shake your head, tsk, and reply, "Ain't it the truth." Tim can pen a fine story. This one is recommended. LO (PO Box 11415/Oakland, CA 94611)

MAMA #1 4.25x5.5 \$1.50 28pgs.

Danielle writes about what it's like to be a new mom. I enjoyed her writing, but wish there was more to read... lots of fun photos though (I'm a sucker for those damn photo booth photos!) and a coloring page! *Mama* #1 definitely needed margins. The pages cut content off everywhere, making it hard to follow sometimes. PK (DE/1830 Stevens Ave. #B/Minneapolis, MN 55403)

MANUFACTURING DISSENT: ROB LOS RICOS 5.5x8.5 \$5 52pgs.

This 'zine is a compilation of writings from Rob Los Ricos, who is currently in prison in Oregon for throwing a rock at a cop during the G8 protests in 1999. The writings about his perspectives on anarchy are wordy, dry, and boring. Intermixed are stories about Rob's life which I liked better. There's also an insightful interview with Rob at the end of the 'zine. I was amazed at the overall optimistic viewpoint Rob has towards his prison sentence and the life that he is looking forward to with his daughter after he is released. Good. PK (APLAN/818 SW 3rd Ave./PMB #354/Portland, OR 97204)

MEDIA READER #7 news \$1 28pgs.

In this issue of *Media Reader* Jessica Hopper talks about publicity, the media, and women in punk rock. John Yates talks about coming into his own as a graphic designer, the people he respects, and the nature of Stealworks. Derrick Jensen talks about the state of our planet's ecology and some thoughts on a sustainable culture. Kathy Kelly of Voices In The Wilderness describes her awakening to social and political injustice in our world and how she seeks to make the world a better place. Also there is an essay on the deck of "most wanted" Iraqi cards and how they and similar creations have become collector's items. Scattered throughout the pages are full-page graphic works and quotations worth remembering. The remaining pages are filled with reviews of recordings and the packaging that contains them. As always the graphic design of *Media Reader* is stellar. SJS (Stickfigure Distro/PO Box 55462/Atlanta, GA 30308)

MISHAP #15 5.5x8.5 \$1/trade 32pgs.

Herein you will find two stories from the revolution, set up as morality tales. The surprising developments as they conclude explore hope, trust, and betrayal among people struggling to create a better world. The stories feature well-written and believable characters. Also included are some brief 'zine and book reviews. The books described seem drawn from the wealth of writing about the international culture wars. Two essays consider the state of journalism and empathy in response to the DC sniper spree. The stories in this issue of *Mishap* may provide reasons to consider when to speak out and when to remain silent. SJS (PO Box 5841/Eugene, OR 97405)

MODERN ARIZONA #3 5.5x8.5 \$1 24pgs.

The theme of this issue revolves around the many faced problems of the US involvement in Iraq. From the article on how the anti war protesters were right all along as we come to realize there are no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq but our soldiers will sure stay there a long time you get a feel where this guy is coming from. He recounts the time he attended a pro war rally with anti-war signs, he reprints pieces from Howard Zinn about the differences between Iraq and Viet Nam a Republican congressman's suspicious questions about the war in Iraq, the commentary is sometimes sarcastic, but always smart. This issue comes with an additional booklet of photos of President Bush with words like "scoundrel," "goofus," and "war monger" placed over them. LO (PO Box 494/Brewster, NY 10509)

MUZINE 8.5x11 \$1 36pgs.

This journal is very similar to *Hidden T.R.E.W.T.H.*, another journal that came from the Broad Street Studio. Basically, it is a collection of creative writing from youths in this program. Most of the pieces in here are poetic or lyrical, though there are a couple essays, some reviews of other Broad Street Studio 'zines, and a bunch of pictures of the people who take part. The subject of the content varies from person to person—but since so many of them are young people, it tends to be about their lives and issues they are dealing with. LO (Broad Street Press/115 Empire St./Providence, RI 02903)

NEW AMERICA #5 8.5x11 \$2 26pgs.

First of all the layout is real bad. The content is pretty dull, too. Song by song reviews of the new Cave In, Alkaline Trio, Cursive, and a Saddle Creek comp. Uh, is this supposed to be *Alternative Press*? A boring Hope Conspiracy interview, some more reviews, and writing about baseball (belch) round this shitty 'zine out. AH (15906 Brookford/Houston, TX 77059)

THE NEW SCHEME #8 8.5x11 \$3 60pgs.

Boring bands like Milemarker, The Influents, Paper Brigade, Denali, Adam Voith, and JR Ewing, along with one good band, Light The Fuse And Run. Reviews of records I don't care about and some pretty bland columns made this 'zine only slightly more interesting than looking out the window on the drive back to Santa Cruz. AH (PO Box 19873/Boulder, CO 80308)

NEWS FROM NOWHERE #3 news 50¢ 8pgs.

This is an anarchist news, information, and resource guide. This small newsletter is full of opinions, poetry, thought and discussion. It only cost postage so you should send in the change you have floating around and fill your head with some ideas you may or may not agree with. CF (PO Box 10384/Eugene, OR 97440)

NEWS FROM THE UNDERGROUND #6 8.5x11 \$1 8pgs.

This is simply a collection of recent (as of printing time) direct action that has taken place around the world. Lots of news from everything from global protest actions to animal and earth liberation. Remember resistance is fertile, not futile. You might as well check this out because, not only is it encouraging, but you won't find out about this stuff from corporate news sources. CF (PO Box 10384/Eugene, OR 97440)

NO. 13 #5-#6 8.5x11 50¢ 16pgs.

No. 13 is a music magazine that covers punk, oi, hardcore, and crust music in the New England area. Issue #5 features interviews with Photon Torpedoes and Bruisers, and Exit 23. Plus some reviews of records of local bands, reviews for a handful of local 'zines, and a few show reviews. Most of issue #6 is similar, with the highlights of that issue being interviews, with S.W.A.T., Chanticleer, Zippo Raid, The Street Dogs, The Struggle, and a reprinted one with Jerry's Kids. Much of the together standard content is the same, though issue #6 has some letters to and from the editor. While this is a good resource for local scene news, *No. 13* remains pretty thin. There are refreshingly few ads and a good amount of interviews at this point. But the newsprint style makes it seem extra slim when you compare it to so many other reads. LO (FNS Publishing/PO Box 1299/Boston, MA 02130)

NO COMPROMISE #21 8.5x11 \$2 36pgs.

If you're not familiar with *No Compromise*, this is the radical animal rights Bible. There is so much information presented, at times it's overwhelmingly depressing. This issue's focus is on factory farming. There's even a how to on investigating factory farms. Another thorough and well put together issue that will challenge even the most die hard vegan animal rights activist to do even more. Excellent. PK (740A 14th St. #125/San Francisco, CA 94114)

THE OBJECTOR Summer 2003 8.5x11 \$2 20pgs.

Published by the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO) this journal analyzes the relationship between the war abroad and domestic issues and concerns. Some articles examine the effects of government sanctioned domestic security measures and military thinking on US citizens, with particular attention to women and people of color. Other articles explore the successes of the anti-war movement, the movement to repeal the Patriot Act, and a group of artists, musical and otherwise, who have taken a stand against the policies of the junta in DC. There also are updates and information about the activities and programs of the CCCO. SJS (CCCO/630 20th St. #302/Oakland, CA 94612)

PARIAH #7 5.5x8.5 \$1 44pgs.

Pariah opens with a multi-page statement about the commodification of our culture and the effect of advertising on our self image and self worth. This is done with one well state poem pasted over images of beauty from various ads. Then, you get a forward thinking article that debates any idea that veganism is bad for you. Other sections talk about the evils of the two parties that run US government, positive uses for the internet, the negative effects the US population's lifestyle habits have on the world's ecosystem, gives suggestions on how to lessen your personal impact, and much more. I really enjoyed the mindset behind this 'zine. These folks seem totally right on and express it well. LO (120 McMechen St. #C3204/Baltimore, MD 21217)

A PERFECT WORLD 5.5x4.25 \$1 36pgs.

Contained within these pages are thoughts and observations from a 600 plus year old clone created by a billionaire seeking immortality. Turns out clones seem not to die. He witnesses an orgy of genetic manipulation, miracle children, and generations of de-evolution. The clone describes his solitude while witnessing the collapse of civilization. There are many nifty heart illustrations accompanying the story. SJS (PO Box 21533/1424 Commercial Dr./Vancouver, BC/V51 5G2/Canada)

PERSONALITY LIBERATION FRONT #4 5.5x8.5 \$7 96pgs

This is the type of thing that saves me from going insane. This is all about the ideas, people, and bands that make this hardcore/punk thing a threat to the status quo. This is so great. Interviews with Catharsis, Australian heroes Conation, and in depth and extremely thought provoking articles on women's body image politics, masculinity and male body image, a critique of punk rock consumerism, the editor's recent trip to Mexico, and herbal abortions. This 'zine has a huge emphasis on personal revolution and DIY culture as a means to spread subversion. The layout is a great cut and paste number that is peppered with quotes of bands and 'zines that emphasize whatever point the article is making. The CD that came with this is equally rocking as the 'zine, with a bunch of Aussie bands playing hardcore, metalcore, emo, thrash, and good old punk. This rules my life and my personality is being liberated. CD (Kylie/PO Box 430/Newtown, NSW 2042/Australia)

POET'S GROOVE #11 5.5x8.5 \$2/trade 40pgs.

An interesting mix of poetry, short fictional pieces and travel stories. I enjoyed the travel stories the most and felt the author definitely hit his/her groove with those. The rest of the content was too abstract to make an impression. PK (S. Sebastian Petsu/4811 Springfield Ave./Philadelphia, PA 19143)

PROFANE EXISTENCE #43 news free 16pgs.

Damn, the piece on the black bloc is great! Taking up a good portion of this issue, the article covers history, specific uses, suggestions on how to organize, and lots of in depth detail about the black bloc. It really gives you a cohesive reference point. I should warn you that is comes from the Crimethinc people, so if you think they are wacky you might not be that into it. But, really, it is a pretty good piece. This issue of PE also features an expose on Clear Channel and a new interview with the Evasion dude, as well as the regular news, columns, and reviews. Of course, you also get the good old "up the punx" attitude that you have come to expect from PE. I'm glad they are still putting this 'zine out. LO (PO Box 8722/Minneapolis, MN 55408)

PUNX BEFORE PROFITS #14 8.5x11 \$7 4pgs.

One 11x17 sheet of paper folded down to make a 4 page 'zine about DIY, punk, and DIY punk. There is an article called "A Different Breed" that kinda freaks me out a bit. Calling punks "mutants" and everyone else "normal," with references to the X-Men and the "mutant war." Very exclusionary, black and white thoughts and ideas that are pretty sad. Have fun building those walls. There is an interview with a fellow named Matt who does a 'zine out of prison called *Poor And Forgotten* that was pretty interesting. If you ever see that 'zine, check it out! MAH (PO Box 1084/Buffalo, NY 14215)

REASON TO BELIEVE #9 8.5x11 \$1 72pgs.

Articles in this issue of *Reason To Believe* examine human rights and anti-militarist struggles in several parts of the planet. One offers an overview of travelling in Tibet and observations of the political stranglehold China maintains on the region. Another provides a lengthy overview of the actions and protests during the most recent G8 summit in Evian, France. There is a story from a person who traveled to occupied Palestine with the International Solidarity Movement, and an interview with two of the folks living at the peace camp where the Faslane Naval Base in England. Bands interviewed include Rai Ko Ris from Nepal, Nikmat Olalim from Israel, the Barnhouse Effect from the Netherlands, and Skitkids from Sweden. The remainder of the pages are filled with letters, European music news, and many reviews of records, 'zines, and a few books. SJS (145-149 Cardigan Rd./Leeds/LS6 1LJ/UK)

REVOLUTIONARY MANIFESTO OF THE SHORT PERSONS LIBERATION FRONT 5.5x8.5 \$2 8pgs.

This is a weird little pamphlet. This guy spells women wrong, just like they did back in those Halcyon PC overload days. The overall viewpoint of this guy is that the world is prejudice against shrimps. Ha ha. I'm 6'3" and have been fucked with by so many short asshole jocks that I can count. Look for my upcoming pamphlet on what it's like to be a victim of "short man syndrome." AH (smashthalocracy@yahoo.com)

SEMTEX #6 5.5x8.5 \$2 96pgs.

This is an international 'zine based in Belgium that covers the indie/emo/hardcore end of the spectrum. This issue comes with a diary project, a sort of mini-zine stapled to the outside of this 'zine. The diary project is really rad, because it offers a glimpse into the lives, peers that I probably wouldn't get to meet. Refreshing, because it encompasses other aspects of life than just focusing on one topic. Inside you get interviews with Quetzal from Belgium, Highscore from Germany, Ache Records from Canada, and Marc Insenberg of the band Reno Kid. You also get some columns, letters, and music reviews. All the interviews are well done, and I enjoyed this, especially the diary project. CD (Thomas Byttebier/Collegelaan 91/8530 Harelbeke/Belgium)

SEVER LOU 1 #7 5.5x8.5 free 8pgs.

This quick read tells you about urban fashion, some of the releases from neo new wave bands, and some things that amuse the editor. The interview with The Yeah Yeah Yeahs, concert reviews, and record reviews can be considered the features for this one. All of the content is very short and there isn't much to read, but the pages are filled with little tidbits so they don't waste any space. LO (Malaka Gharib/20807 Elaine Ave. #5/Lakewood, CA 90715)

SHORT, FAST & LOUD #10 8.5x11 \$3 96pgs.

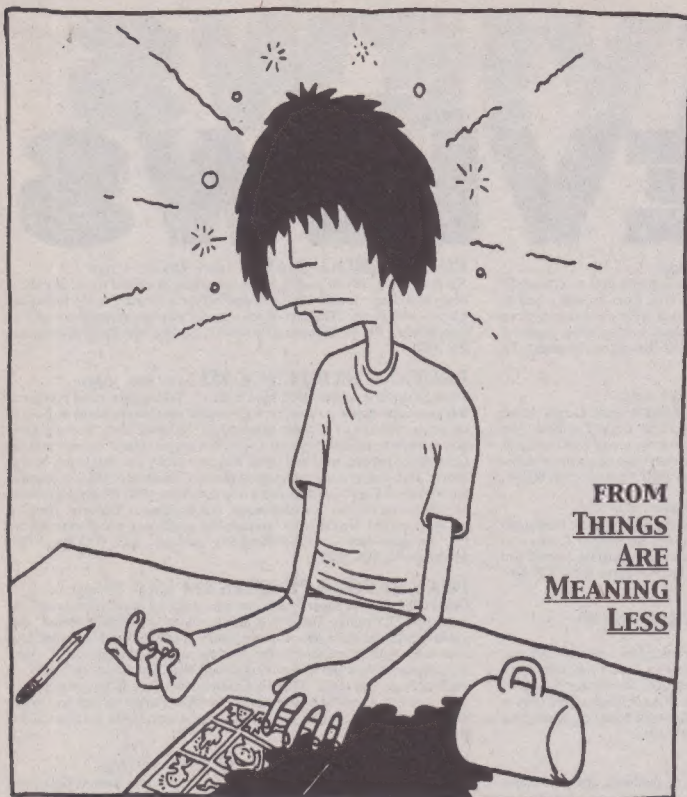
Here is yet another fine issue of *Short, Fast & Loud* for all of you discriminating thrash heads, hardcore types, and punk rockers of the world. Various columns, rants, comics and reviews, including Hixar Max's wonderful world of exotic demos and releases from around the globe. Interviews this issue are with Betercore, Brodys Militia, Intense Youth and Sairat Milet. There is even a little piece on old Italian Hardcore bands Negazione and Indigesti. And as always excellent photos to boot! Good stuff. CF (225 Lincoln Ave./Cotai, CA 94931)

SLUG & LETTUCE #76 news 60¢ 20pgs.

Ahh... A standard you shall always rely upon when you are feeling disconnected. All the constants are here, photos of live bands and great columns from diverse people. And as usual book, magazine and record reviews. S&L has always been a great resource for the punk and DIY community. CF (Christine/PO Box 26632/Richmond, VA 23261)

STIR KRAZY #6 8.5x11 \$4 24pgs.

This issue starts off with a rant about the validity of 'zines as an alternative to mainstream press, and then goes into articles about prison, the war on drugs and a history of hemp use/marijuana in the US. These articles are too brief to make an impression. I think one longer and thoroughly researched piece would have been better. The one personal piece about heroin use hits its mark, but is equally short. I wanted to hear more about this person's experiences. Much of the rest is filler with questionable artwork and unnecessarily wide margins. If the space is there, use it! PK (PO Box 25148/Rochester, NY 14625)



FROM THINGS ARE MEANING LESS

THE STUDENT INSURGENT June 2003

news \$1 24pgs.

This is a newspaper that comes from the University of Oregon's student activist community. Within its pages, it covers issues of radical politics, art, and lifestyle-ism. The main features of this issue deal with the incestuous relationship between big business and the US government, how supporting McDonalds helps to destroy the environment and international community, the (then) upcoming events of the WTO meetings and recent protest actions, and an interview with activist Hope Marston. LO (UO Student Insurgent/Suite 1/Erb Memorial Union/1228 Univ. Of OR/Eugene, OR 97403)

SUBURBAN VOICE #46 8.5x11 \$3 128pgs.

Here, of course, you have pages upon pages tiny words about punk rock and hardcore. This 'zine is so rad just cuz of the sheer volume, and quality. In depth and long articles with Martin of Crudos/Limpwrist, Vitamin-X, Rambo, Amdt Peterson's Arme, Balance of Terror, Cut the Shirt, Holding On, and The Pist. You also get tons of show, 'zine, music and video reviews, covering tons of stuff that came out in the last year, and a few columns. This is a great 'zine with some thing to offer practically anyone interested in punk/hardcore music and culture. CD (PO Box 2746/Lynn, MA 01903)

THIS IS ME USING MY CHOICE 7x8.5 \$? 56pgs.

Subtitled "An Anthology Of Women's Abortion Stories," this publication collects essays and writings which explore methods of abortion and various thoughts about abortion from women who have chosen to terminate a pregnancy. Several contributions describe the herbal preparations and teas that can be used in preparation for and aid with recovery after an abortion. Information about methods of medical and herbal abortion is provided as well. The stories describe (often in detail) the psychological, emotional, and physical aspects of choosing abortion and how each person feels about her decision after the fact. There are descriptions of complications both physical and emotional. The self analysis each woman has undertaken results in a variety of opinions about the choice each made. SJS (Gabriela/PO Box 21530/1850 Commercial Dr./Vancouver, BC V5N 4A5/Canada)

TOILET PAPER #5 5.5x8.5 \$2 40pgs

This is a nice little 'zine from Germany. Normal 'zine stuff like interviews with Gertrude, Cheetah Records, and more fill its pages. There are also reviews, poetry, etc. Nothing to go ape shit over, but good to read while your taking a poop or something. MAH (Alva Dittich/Joh. Kohlmann Str. 8/53913 Swisttal/Germany)

THE TRAVELER 5.5x8.5 \$2 84pgs.

This is a collection of stories written by women who travel alone or with other women either by choice or not. These stories do not focus sights and places though. They are mostly about getting from place to place and the interactions with other humans that will involve. The stories take place throughout our world and usually involve hitchhiking or trainhopping. There is one excellent tale of motorcycling in Taiwan. A few of these travels pass relatively uneventful and the author reflects on the joy of being on the road. Others tell of harrowing or unpleasant experiences with men making presumptions about women hitchhiking. These stories offer knowledge gained from good and bad experiences while travelling. Closing this issue is a description of how to use of yelling as a means of self-defense. SJS (Spoke/164 Lac du Pin Rouge/St-Hippolyte, QC/JOR IPO/Canada)

UNITED WORDS 5.5x8.5 \$5 36pgs.

Teryl writes stories and poems filled with love, danger, and wonder. Much of his stories are fantasy based with a strong moral running through them. The poems take on different personal and political issues. He tends to use wording that reminds me of Middle English, so there is a splendid nature to them. This project is all about getting what is going on in Teryl's brain out on paper. Even though many of the pieces in this 'zine could be considered fictional, they strike me as intensely personal allegories from Teryl's experiences. LO (Broad Street Press/115 Empire St./Providence, RI 02903)

UHPHRA #1

5.5x8.5 \$1/trade 20pgs.

The title stands for "United Hardcore Punk And Hiphop Radical Alliance." This is issue #1 and Uhptra is a 3 person DIY organization that is aimed at uniting activist/politically aware people from both scenes. Some of their goals are to release music from hip hop and hardcore artists, distro political info and music, hold concerts and rallies, and hope fully learn to do layouts better. That last one I added, because this is a really cool idea, but the 'zine has parts you can't read because of the layout is all crooked. Other than that though, this is a really cool effort that will hopefully get more full and diverse as time goes on. This time around you get short interviews with Crucial Unit, Craig from WHN?, and Nomar Slevik, a Polish political hip hopper. You also get an informative article about the workings of LEIU, Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit, which started in the '50s and is an extensive national and international network of police agencies that gather and share information. They had a meeting in Seattle in June and the topic was "Criminal Intelligence And The War Against Terrorism" including criminal protest groups and domestic and international terrorism. Scary. Like I said before this 'zine is a good idea, that will hopefully get better. CD (Homeless/1160 Timbercrest/Youngstown, OH 44505)

UPDATE #38 8.5x11 \$? 16pgs.

This newsletter is the summer 2003 issue, and gives updates on political prisoners around the world, a short article on the war in Iraq, and some information on the Move 9 from Philadelphia, who have been in prison for twenty five years now. Very informative. MAH (ABCF-Jax/PO Box 350392/Jacksonville, FL 32235)

VOICES WAKE US #7

8.5x11 \$1 32pgs.

Once again, Ben does it. Combining hardcore, crust, punk, and metal in one magazine and injecting the dead 'zine world with some life (fuck the internet). This issue has an interview with Felix Havoc's new band Damage Deposit and, as always-opinionated opinions that you can either do with or without. Ben also does a great job of listing and describing some of the current and past movers and shakers of the different of Japanese hardcore. There is also a column/history about one of the best black metal bands ever, Emperor. All you have to do is see the video "Imperial Live Ceremony" and even the most anti black metal types are impressed with this bands sheer musical talent and intensity. As always there are plenty of top 10 type lists through out the magazine that somewhat contradict themselves occasionally. There is also a good little piece on crust/hardcore band Doom. I think I like this 'zine so much because Ben covers all the music I am really into, even if he doesn't really like the Ulver albums Bergatt and Kveldssanger. I bet Ben never hiked through the forest at night with only a shitty light, a case of beer and Ulver on the boom box! HA HA! That's pretty black metal. As far as the mystery of the origins of the Misfits song "138" that he writes about, I always thought it was about George Lucas' odd Orwellian meets Logan's Run film "THX R 138." CF (Ben Parker/5290 Lerner Hall/New York, NY 10027)

WHAT GOD HAS REVEALED TO MAN

4.25x5.5 74¢ 12pgs.

So Christoph was sent one of those wacky biblical pamphlets with the same name, but it was blank. Apparently, God hadn't revealed much to man so far... That alone is pretty funny but Christoph did one better but filling in the missing pages with his own sarcastic stick figure comic. Ha! Good one, Christoph. LO (Christoph Meyer/PO Box 106/Danville, OH 43014)

BOOK REVIEWS:

THE BEST OF INTENTIONS: AN AVOW

ANTHOLOGY 5.5x8.5 \$10 120pgs.

Okay, so we've printed Keith's art, reviewed countless Avow issues, reviewed a couple Pelvis Wesley CDs, are running an interview in this issue, and (to complete the evil pentagram) I will now review his book. Christ, Keith is a real multi-media attack on the HaC staff! First things first, go back and read the interview. I'm sure all five of you 'zine geeks that read the 'zine section first thing will get a better feel for this review after having that interview as in intro. Since the 'zine personality of the 'zine plays such a big part, you might as well get the know the dude.

Avow is a 'zine of art, poetry, stories, punk, and a good sense of humor. Any and all of those things can be focused inward or outward, but always to the delight of this reader. While this book will never stand as a great opus to the punk 'zine community (there is a Cometbus book for folks who need that shit), it holds its own as a damn fine zine. Dan fine. Personally, I love this thing. Did I mention it is damn fine? I've always liked Avow and I am stoked to see a book chronicling the issues that have come out. You get all the content Keith deemed worthy of reprinting. If it was totally embarrassing shit, he skipped it. So it cracks me up that the only thing printed from the first issue is a drawing. So, the rest of the content was that good, huh? Ah well, better and incomplete anthology than a boring book. Why waste the trees. To my entertainment, this trend of minimal reprints continues through the first ten issues, then nearly all the original content works its way into the book; coinciding when Keith thought Avow really started to cook at issue #11. But really, what can I say about this book that hasn't been said about the various issues. You get a lot of sass, a cool layout, thoughtful commentary, funny stories, and the occasional mind blowing art. Plus, it is damn fine. LO (Troy Malish/Box 1168/Elkford, BC/V0B 1H0/Canada)

OFF THE MAP 5.5x8.5 \$3 146pgs.

This is the latest bound offering brought to you by the folks at Crimethinc. The authors in this case are Kika and Hibickina, two women who are bent on creating the life of their dreams. "Life cracks open with just a little tap, pours sweet milky sap right down your throat. Learn to read the signs and you'll find

yourself right where you need to be, another world open at your feet. This is the place we've been looking for since we were small girls chasing fairies in the garden, high schoolers in scowls and witchy black clothes, angry young women who want to get out, out, out of the systems we hate and learn to shape out own lives." This is so great because they are traveling, not to escape, but to find their dreams, and learn to resist in a way that is not just resisting, but empowering as well. They start their adventure in The Netherlands, and start out looking for squats. There destination is Prague, and along the way they stay in an all female squat, a punk squat, they get entertained by stoned skate punk Julien, stay at Liliane's organic farm in France, and tons more. Both women are excellent writers, and this piece of work is highly readable, inspiring, fun and hopeful. The text is broken up by several black and white photos, some handwritten text and illustrations. For only 3 bucks, this book is a great deal, for someone looking for some inspiration. Awesome. CD (Crimethinc Far East/PO Box 1963/Olympia, WA 98507)

STRAIGHT WISKY 6x9 \$22.95 427pgs.

Straight Wisky covers rock and roll's existence in the LA nightclubs of the Sunset Strip. The book spans rock's presence there from around 1965 all the way through the '90s. Most of the book is spent on classic rock, the hippie era, metal and glam rock, but there is a chapter covering the LA punk scene in the late '70s which I found most interesting; you know stuff about the Germs and the infamous Black Flag riots. The writing style is sort of strange in my opinion because on one hand the book is presenting itself as a historical account of events with quotes from folks that lived it, but at the same time there are these really fictitious sections where the authors seem to "know" what people were thinking at the time. Regardless, I found the book to be interesting, though I didn't read the entire thing. I just wasn't interested in some segments simply because I have less than no interest in the style of music being covered at the time. Definitely an interesting book for anyone interested in the history of rock'n'roll as it played itself out in the Whisky, Rainbow, and Roxy venues. KM (Bonus Books/160 E Illinois St/Chicago, IL 60611)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED INTEREST 5.5x8.5 \$12 191pgs.

This is pretty bizarre for a book. Basically this is a collection of absurd letters sent to corporations in response to their products or commercials, followed by the corporate responses if ones were given. It sounds dry. But actually it is laugh out loud funny. Rev. Mackin, for instance, sees a commercial in which a soup company claims a particular mother is the best mother in the world because she serves their soup. Mackin then writes to the company demanding to know why this mother was better than his own mother. He wants to know how they determined that this particular mother was deemed to be the best in the world. It is funny. If you are plugged in to the world of advertising then you have seen tons of idiotic commercials, and most likely you have made all kinds of odd observations about these commercials. Well Mackin takes those same sorts of observations and sends 'em in, and he gets responses. The responses can be equally funny. I enjoyed this book. It makes a strong point about the absurd nature of commercials and a world controlled by advertisements and corporations, but it is funny and witty. Good stuff. KM (Gorsky Press/PO Box 42024/Los Angeles, CA 90042)

THINGS ARE MEANING LESS 8.5x5.5 \$8 152pgs.

For those of you familiar with Al's 'zine *Burn Collector* or his regular columns in various punk mags, you have an idea of what to expect. This book contains a collection of autobiographical comics that delve into the minutia of everyday life. Under a thin veil of sarcasm, emotional turmoil and existential angst make their way into each piece. Much of his experiences speak to other people: the shitty job (or lack thereof), the loneliness, the routine. Sort of a *Dilbert* for the punks. Okay, well that makes it sound kind of bad. *Things Are Meaning Less* is a nice assemblage of hopeless feelings and fledgling mid 20's experiences. It has a satisfying commentary on the use(lessness) of life and plenty of odd thoughts to ponder along the way. I enjoyed it. LO (Microcosm/PO Box 14332/Portland, OR 97293)

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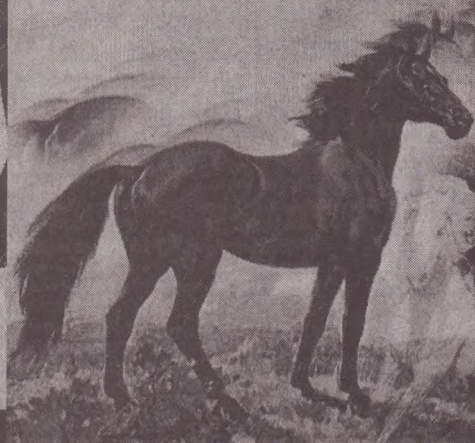
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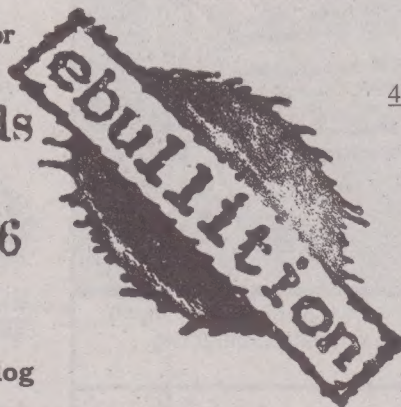
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